4-D Boxing ● Martian Memorandum ● No Greater Glory

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

The Premier Computer Game Magazine

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100 Games Rated!

Number 90

January 1992

47209

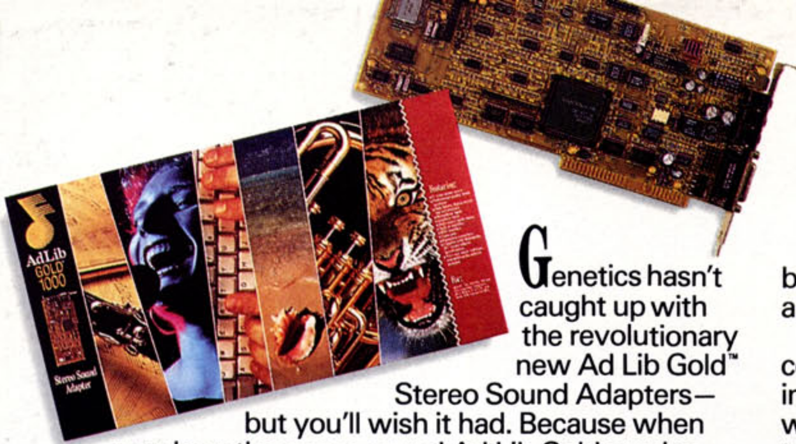
Strategic Studies Group's *Carriers At War*



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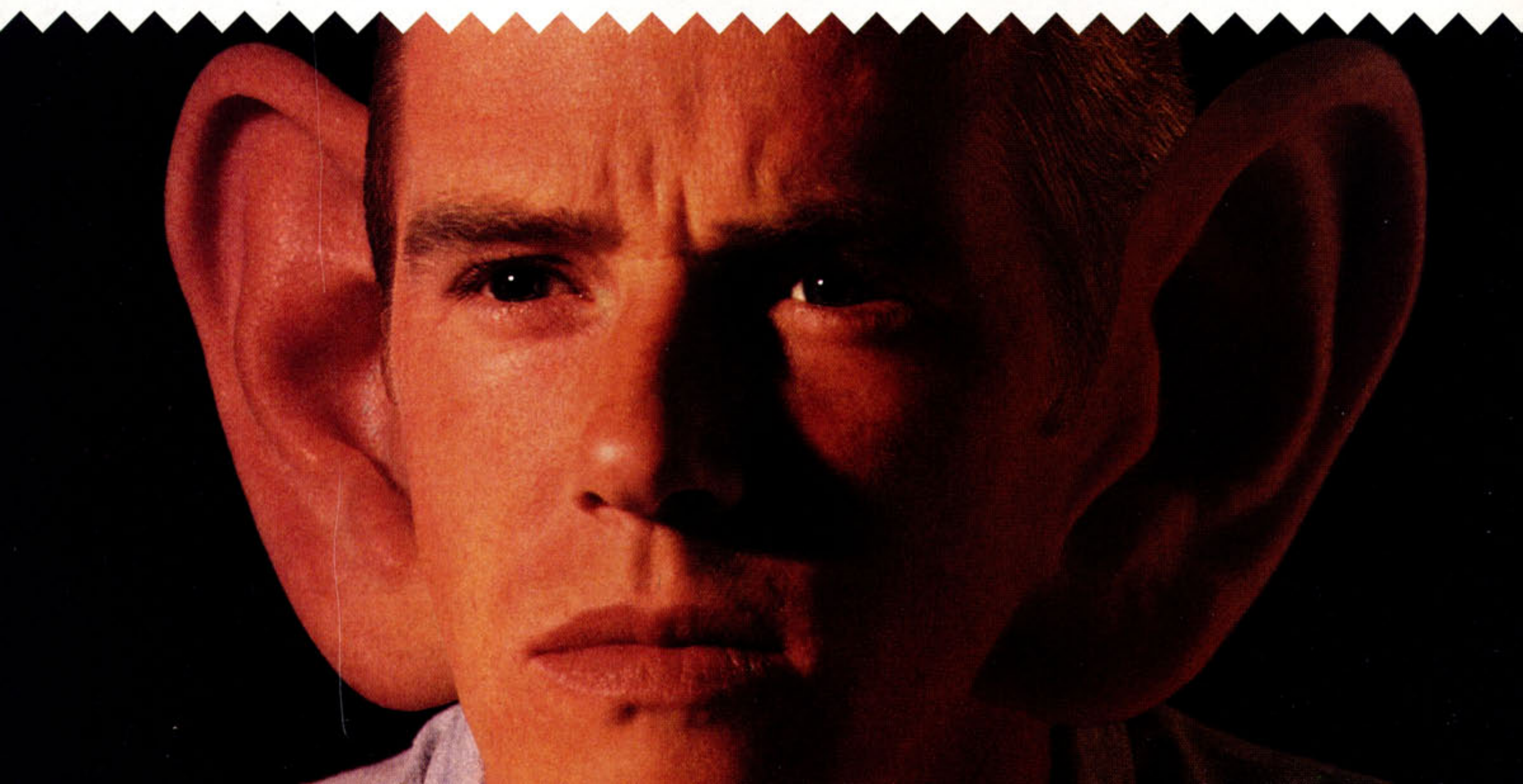
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Circle Reader Service #47





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January 1992 Number 90

Covering the World of Computer Games for Eleven Years

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

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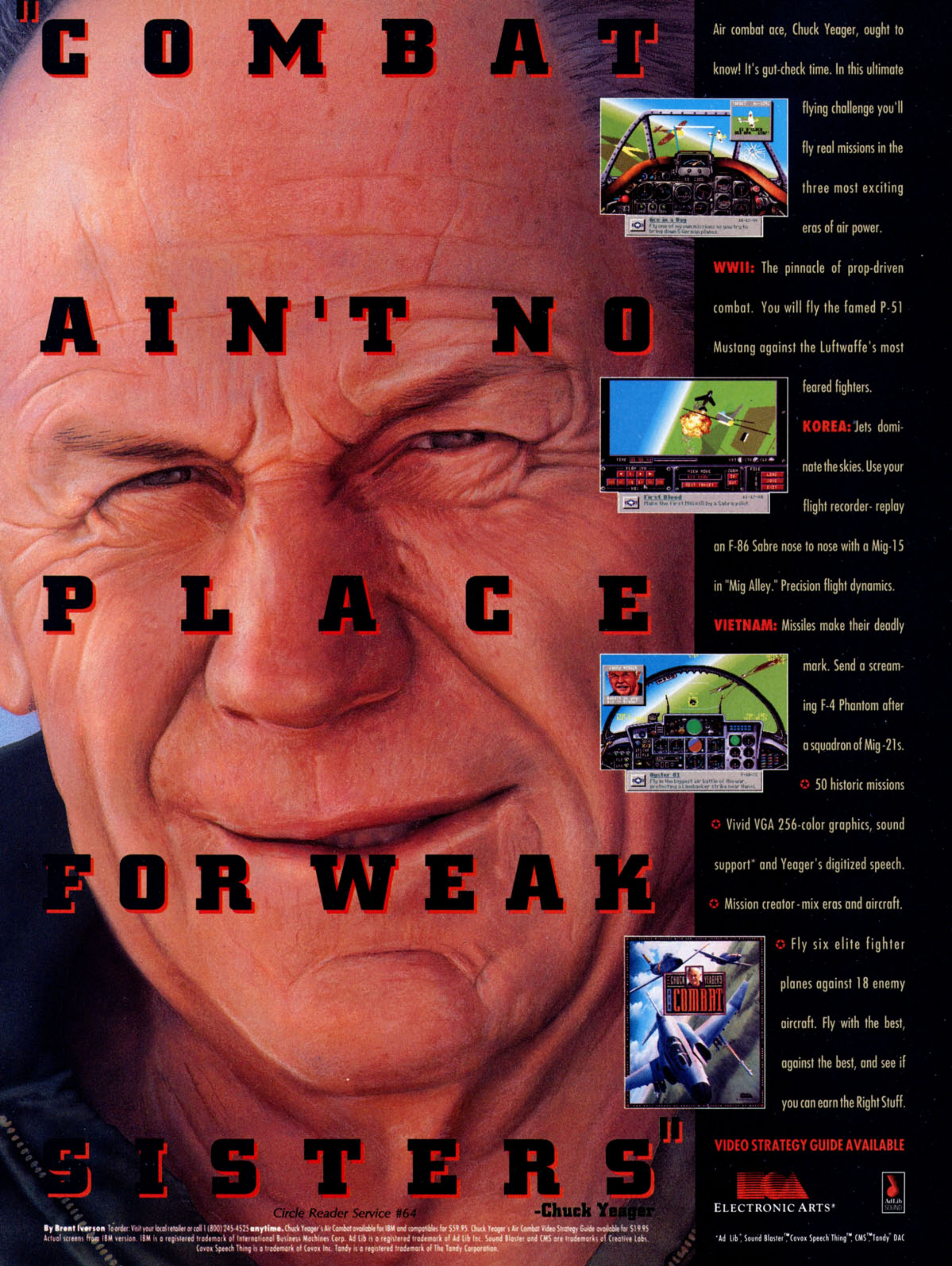
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Psalms 9:1-2

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-Chuck Yeager
Air combat ace, Chuck Yeager, ought to know! It's gut-check time. In this ultimate flying challenge you'll fly real missions in the three most exciting eras of air power.
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Oyster 01
Fly in the biggest air battle of the war, protecting a Linebacker strike near Hanoi.
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By Brent Iverson To order: Visit your local retailer or call 1 (800) 245-4525 anytime. Chuck Yeager's Air Combat available for IBM and compatibles for $59.95. Chuck Yeager's Air Combat Video Strategy Guide available for $19.95
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Accolade
San Jose, CA

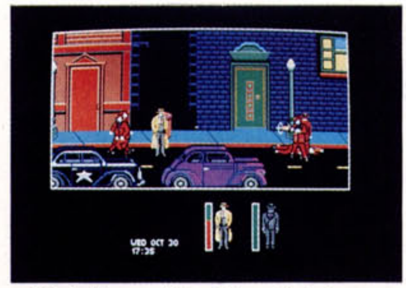
THE GAMES: WINTER CHALLENGE: This product demands "peak" performance from up to ten competitors in eight different pulse-pounding winter sports simulations. Included are downhill, cross country and giant slalom skiing, the ski jump, bobsleds, luge and more. A combination of VGA bit-mapping and polygon-filled graphics combine with full sound support and instant replay feature to create a "winter wonderland" for sports enthusiasts. IBM ($54.95). Circle Reader Service #1.

Disney Software
Burbank, CA

DICK TRACY: THE CRIME-SOLVING ADVENTURE: A tour de force for Disney's *Sound Source*, *Dick Tracy* is full of digitized sounds, voices and music that add a cinematic touch to a game with comic book transition scenes and arcade actions sequences. There's plenty of problem solving, too, as criminals must be interrogated, clues found and wiretaps placed. Will Tracy be able to clean up the city? Get a clue and find out... IBM ($39.95 or $59.95 in a



The Games: Winter Challenge



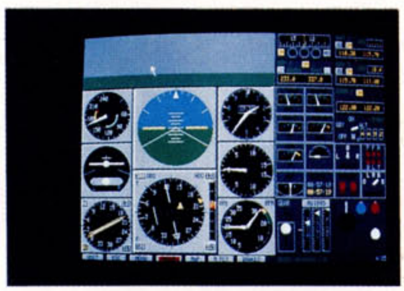
Dick Tracy: The Crime-Solving...



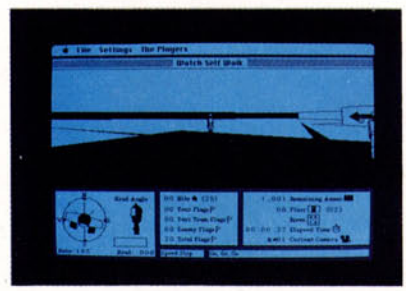
Hare-Raising Havoc



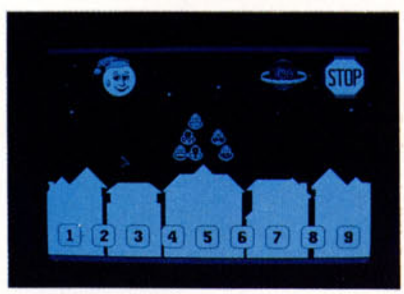
The Adventures of Willy Beamish



The Instrument Flight Trainer



Splat'ers



Sesame Street: ABCs and 123s



Aliens Ate My Babysitter

combo pack with the *Sound Source*). Circle Reader Service #2.

HARE-RAISING HAVOC: Roger Rabbit has his own personal gauntlet to run in this interactive cartoon. Using some *very* bizarre logic (?) puzzles, Roger must figure out how to rescue Baby Herman before Mother comes back and sends Roger back to the science lab. Full of pratfalls, electrocutions, and other forms of cartoon violence, *Hase-Raising Havoc* gets plenty of laughs. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #3.

Dynamix
Eugene, OR

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH: As previewed in *CGW* #86, cartoon hero Willy Beamish, the irrepressible pre-teen and modern suburban survivalist, takes players through an animated adventure that is a cross somewhere between *The Wonder Years* and *The Simpsons*. A wild adventure game that's full of youthful mischief and grand adventure. IBM ($59.95). Circle Reader Service #4.

Flight Deck Software
Williamsburg, VA
(804) 229-1757

THE INSTRUMENT FLIGHT TRAINER (PROFESSIONAL 5.0): This is *not* a flight simulator, per se, but is an instrument trainer. This is not a game, although it *is* fascinating in its true-to-life "feel" for real life instrument flying. The program doesn't emphasize the "outside view" and the user interface relies on both keyboard and joystick input. Basically, what *Microsoft Flight Simulator* is to civilian flight, this product is to civilian instrument

Advertiser Index

flight, using scaled, detailed graphics. IBM (*professionally priced* at $499.95). Circle Reader Service #5.

Bullseye Software
Incline Valley, NV

SPLAT'ERS: The highly popular outdoor *"Paint Wars"* game comes to the personal computer in this arcade strategy game. Armed with a "semi-automatic" air-powered paint pistol, the object is to capture flags from the maze of rooms while avoiding the polygon-filled opponents and helping teammates. MAC ($69.95). Circle Reader Service #6.

Hi Tech
New York, NY

SESAME STREET: ABC's AND 123's: These two black and white Macintosh games are relatively mediocre edutainment programs. What gives this package value is the fact that *two* programs are included in the box and that one's kids might be more inclined to learn from them through the licensing of the Sesame Street characters. *Letter Go Round* has Big Bird practicing letter recognition, spelling and word formation, while *Astro Grover* (pictured) has children counting, adding and subtracting. MAC ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #7.

FormGen
Toronto, Canada

COMMANDER KEEN: ALIENS ATE MY BABY SITTER!: Young genius Billy Blaze is in a world of hurt. Nasty aliens from the planet Fribbulus Xax have stolen his baby sitter and his parents are going to be home soon. This is a job for Commander Keen, with all the jumping, dodging, climbing, shooting and other arcade actions one can imagine. There is even a *Pong* "game within the game" to play as the "player" passes the time during long space voyages. IBM ($49.95). Circle Service #8.

ADVENTURES OF BEETLEJUICE: SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET: This surreal shoot-'em-up is geared for younger players who might benefit from a slower paced game. Beetlejuice must zap skeletons in an attempt to rescue the fair (?) maiden Lydia. Still, he can't stand around to line up the perfect shot, since a "Jaws"-like monster emerges from the floor at random and its favorite drink is Beetlejuice. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #9.

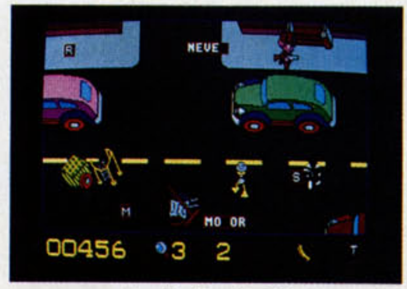
DAFFY DUCK, P.I.: THE CASE OF THE MISSING LETTERS: The familiar Warner Brothers cartoon characters are attempting to stop daring, undaunted Daffy Duck from collecting the missing letters. These "missing letters," of course, complete the partially assembled words located around the game board which, when completed, allow Daffy to press ahead onto the next level. Judicious use of bananas can keep the blocking characters at bay long enough to made a "b" line for the next letter. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #10.

THE FLINTSTONES: DINO: LOST IN BEDROCK: Long before there was "Bonk," there was Fred Flintstone! This arcade/video game for IBM-oriented youngsters puts Fred on the trail of his missing pet, Dino, through tar pits, swamps and the ever popular rock quarry. Definitely for the younger crowd (preschool to preteen), things move at a slightly slower pace with fewer "monsters" than most Nintendo games. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #11.

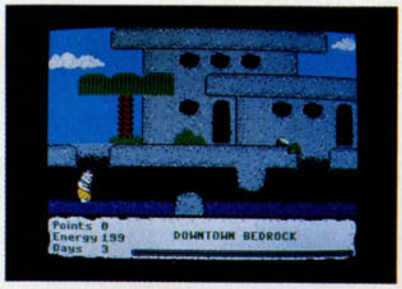
GREMLINS 2: THE NEW BATCH: Trapped in a high rise building of 46 floors, each overrun



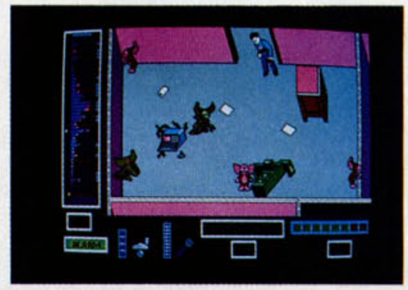
Beetlejuice: Skeletons in the Closet



Daffy Duck, P.I.



Dino: Lost in Bedrock



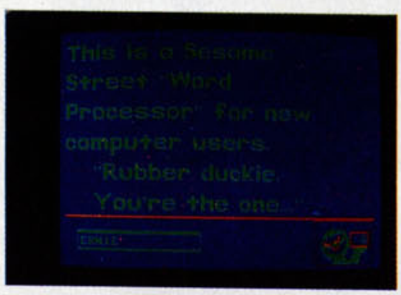
Gremlins 2: The New Batch



By George, in Trouble Again



Sesame Street: Learning Classics



First Writers Print Kit



Tom & Jerry: Yankee Doodle's...

with cute little brown gremlins who, left to their own devices will become the "green meanies" of cinema fame. Armed with only a flashlight and incendiary camera flash, the player must walk around the floor/mazes searching for the batteries and flash bulbs to keep his weapons at full charge. This one should keep arcade gamers amused past midnight. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #12.

THE JETSONS: BY GEORGE, IN TROUBLE AGAIN: It's a sad day at Spacely's Space Sprockets. Automation aggravation is running rampant and tools, cogs and gears go on a rampage. George Jetson must jump and crawl past every obstacle in order not only to save his job, but his whole company. Fortunately, Rosie the robot has a control rod which will slow down the mutant mechanisms. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #13.

SESAME STREET: LEARNING CLASSICS: This "bundle o' bits" includes seven "classic" Sesame Street learning programs in one box. It is easy to tell they are "classics" by their "classic" CGA level graphics. Still, *Ernie's Magic Shapes* and *Big Bird's Special Delivery* will have enough recognition for the less critical young Cookie Monsters of the household. *Letter-Go-Round* is pictured, but all the games feature the basics of number, letter, color and shape recognition. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #14.

SESAME STREET: FIRST WRITER & PRINT KIT: Three programs in one, the *Letter-Go-Round* (pictured under *Sesame Street: Learning Classics* where it is also included), *Sesame Street First Writer* and the *Sesame Street Print Kit* give kids a real beginning level, "hands on" experience into word process-



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Hit the auto pilot switch and you're launched right into the heat of battle. Not recommended for the faint of heart or weak of stomach.

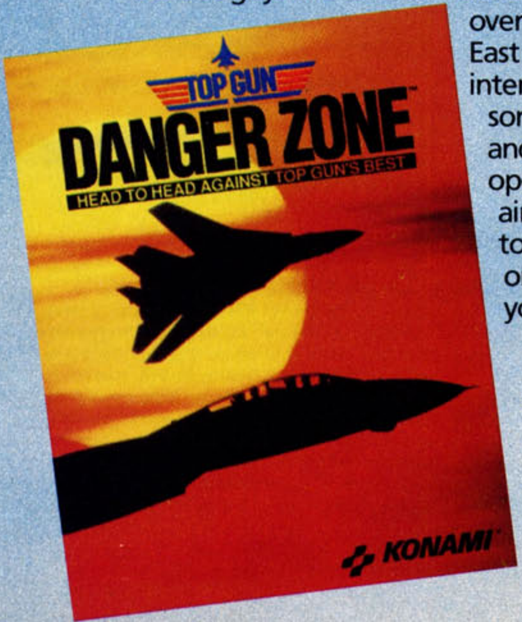




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Few aerial combat simulations are so mind jarring you see double. But that's exactly what you'll experience when entering the Top Gun® Danger Zone.™ Turn and burn in an F-14 Tomcat or F-18 Hornet against a friend in the split screen mode. Or fly solo against the best bogeys the CPU can launch in a death duel above the sand dunes over Syria, Libya, and Egypt. Eight Middle East missions including intercept, interference, escort, and air support sorties. Earn the title of Top Gun and you'll be selected for a rescue operation deep inside hostile airspace. But you'll need cunning to match your courage because one hit in this air strike and you're out. **Available for MS-DOS.**





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ing and printing. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #15.

TOM & JERRY: YANKEE DOODLE'S CAT-ASTROPHE: This animated cartoon arcade game allows the player to take the role of Jerry in this action/arcade romp through a household full of cartoon mayhem. Antagonist Tom is after our hero, and the two characters can fence, throw eggs and dynamite at each other at will. IBM ($24.97). Circle Reader Service #16.

Better Games
P.O. Box 7644
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 588-0795

STELLAR AGENT: While most people thought that the "text only" adventure game died with the brouhaha at **Infocom**, Robert A. Kraus has attempted to recapture the glory days of old. Using a menu-driven interface in lieu of an actual parser, *Stellar Agent* puts the player square in a science-fiction spy adventure that is both enjoyable to read *and* play. IBM ($35.00). Circle Reader Service #17.

Koei Corporation
Burlingame, CA

ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS II: *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is back with AdLib compatible sound support, a classier looking rules manual and an additional scenario. Historical and "fiction" options are also available for each scenario. IBM ($69.95). Circle Reader Service #18.

Konami
Buffalo Grove, IL

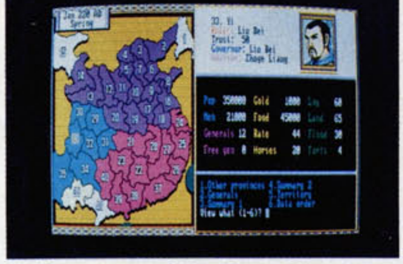
BACK TO THE FUTURE: PART III: With the object to rescue Clara Clayton and stop Buford "Mad Dog" Tannen, the player must maneuver through classic arcade sequences in order to get the girl. As Marty McFly and Doc, the West becomes wild again with 3-D scrolling action, as well as shoot-outs and a pie tin toss! AMIGA ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #19.

KILLING CLOUD: The San Francisco Police Department of 2097 is very different from 100 years ago. Through the toxic smog, the evil gang of Black Angels knows that the only good cop is a dead cop. Your mission: to fly a hovercraft and (literally) net the bad guys. Armed with machine guns and cannons, players fly through this simulation/adventure game not only to catch the bad guys, but also to get the bottom of the toxic "Killing Cloud" that threatens the city. Amiga ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #20.

J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S RIDERS OF ROHAN: Things do not look good for the Riders of Rohan. With Saruman flipped out in Isengard and the evil forces of Sauron stirring to the east, what's a king to do? This game puts the player under the crown of Rohan's King Theoden who must wage war with Isengard. A strategy game in "real time" (akin to *Command HQ* in that regard), this fantasy epic has been a long time coming and offers a plethora of features for Tolkien fans and strategists alike. Troops must be maneuvered strategically and tactically in battle (a la *Sword of Aragon*) in order to secure the day for the forces of goodness. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #21.

Maxis
Orinda, CA

SIM ANT: This time the "bugs" in your computer are *meant* to be there. With this electronic version of an Ant Farm gone wild,



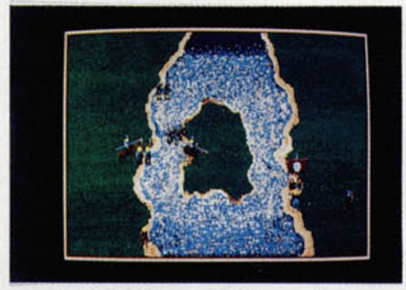
Romance of the Three Kingdoms II



Back to the Future Part III



Killing Cloud



J.R.R. Tolkien's Riders of Rohan



SimAnt



Rotor



The Coach's Challenge, Deluxe Ed.



Magic Tricks... on Your Computer

the player takes on role of "entodeus" (literally, "insect god") in the tradition of the hit "sim" toys, *SimCity* and *SimEarth*. Not only will players acquire a default knowledge of the workings of ants, but a *competitive* game element as been added to this sim entry, pitting the red ants against the black ants for back yard supremacy. MAC ($59.95). Circle Reader Service #22.

Microdraft
Taylor, PA

ROTOR: Another in the genre of "fly by and die, guy" games, *Rotor* puts the player in command of a cannon-packed, small flying saucer. The object is to shoot "containers" and, more often than not, rescue their contents. Naturally, harrying bad guys are there to shoot back, as the player tries to pick up items which increase fuel, speed, armor, etc. Take aim and shoot, but remember: there are no brakes on this contraption! Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #23.

Microleague Sports
Newark, DE

MICROLEAGUE FOOTBALL: THE COACHES CHALLENGE, DELUXE EDITION: Another contender for the "comprehensive football" championship, this one uses real NFL teams in a statistics based contest for gridiron supremacy. Using a point-and-click interface over clear menus, players get both a cute animation and a play-by-play text message to reflect the results of their coaching decisions. The game comes complete with the capacity to create teams, leagues and replay

ATTEMPT TO DEFUSE A HIGHLY CHARGED PLOT OF MURDER, CORRUPTION AND INTRIGUE.

- Your mission in this adventure role play, should you choose to accept it, is to delve into a dangerous world of espionage and uncover a large scale plot that could lead to crime riddled government.
- Create a team of four agents from a pool of 20, each with a range of character profiles to choose from, based on attributes and skills such as stamina, charisma, will power, persuasion, impersonation, armed and unarmed combat, and more.





- Equip your agents with the devices necessary to find clues, gather vital intelligence and survive crucial encounters.
- Send all four agents on assignment simultaneously, going undercover, probing suspicious events and spying on unsavory characters.
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- Comprehensive grid map of entire mission setting lets you track agents and members of the underworld.
- Agents can acquire new skills and improve on others throughout the mission.
- Digitized graphic scenes and original music from the Mission: Impossible television series.

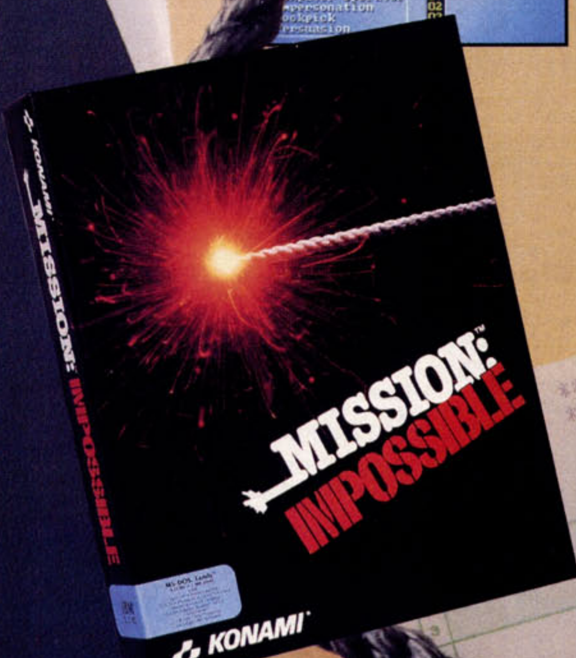
Available Fall 1991 for MS-DOS.











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entire seasons. IBM ($69.95). Circle Reader Service #24.

MicroMagic
175 5th Avenue #2625
New York, NY 10010
(212) 969-0220

MICRO MAGIC: MAGIC TRICKS YOU CAN PERFORM ON YOUR MICRO COMPUTER: And now for something completely different: Magic tricks on your PC. This package is neither game nor toy, but a program (with several accessories such five decks of cards, tokens, boards, etc.) which conjures electronic prestidigitation. Having one's computer predict the future, read minds or employ x-ray vision is a bit unusual (to say the least), but with a little human assistance, the "magic" is truly there. IBM ($53.00 — Introductory price). Circle Reader Service #25.

Nemesis
Honolulu, HI

GO MASTER: Expanding on the features of *Go Junior* (see below), *Go Master* is undoubtedly one of the best teaching and playing programs on this game. Designed exclusively for a Microsoft Windows environment, this version expands on the concept of groups, as well as their offense and defense. It even allows editing the board, replay and modem support. IBM ($69.00). Circle Reader Service #26.

GO JUNIOR: Designed as a teacher to *Go* novices, this package offers three different board sizes, including an 9x9 board size to get beginners into the game quickly and easily. With the analysis feature selected, players will see the concepts of influence, liberties and the scoring mechanisms explained in actual use. This game will get players *Go*-ing. MAC ($35.00). Circle Reader Service #27.

DELUXE TOOLKIT — INCLUDES: JOSEKI GENIUS, TACTICAL WIZARD, & SCRIBBLER: How serious can one get about the game of *Go*? Owners of this package will find out. Featuring important lessons on corner openings, a tactical "life and death" analyzer plus the "Nemesis Scribbler" (a game recording and annotation system), this tool kit is a stand alone product which can be linked with *Go Master* for the ultimate *Go* experience. For the true devotee. IBM/MS WINDOWS 3.0 ($139.00). Circle Reader Service #28.

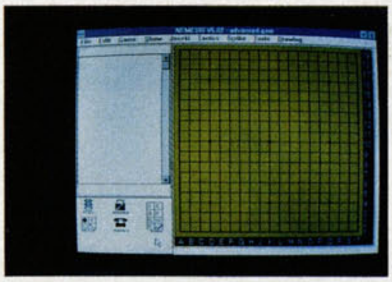
Rainbow Arts c/o Softgold
Kaarst, GERMANY

LOGICAL: The clock is constantly ticking in this *Tris* like puzzle game. In *Logical*, one must place the falling balls, which come in four different colors, into a four-hole rotating receptacle. The object is to get four of one color in each hole, so that it will be closed off. Once all four holes are closed, the player advances to the next of the 100 levels. Of course, tricky elements like color changers, one-way arrows, traffic lights and teleporters (at the higher levels) won't make the player's simple task simple for long... *Logical* contains rules in four European languages (one of which is, fortunately, English). Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #29.

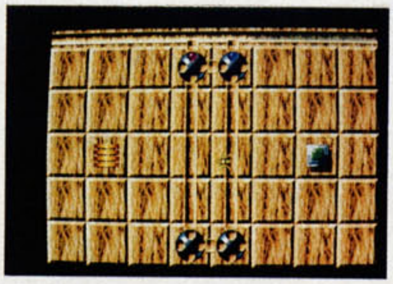
Strategic Simulations, Inc.
Sunnyvale, CA

TONY LARUSSA'S ULTIMATE BASEBALL: A.L. STADIUMS DISK: This supplemental disk requires ownership of *Tony LaRussa's Ultimate Baseball* to use and adds all 14 American League stadiums to the game. IBM ($19.95). Circle Reader Service #30.

TONY LARUSSA'S ULTIMATE BASEBALL:



Go Master



Logical



Shadow Sorcerer



Murder!



Conan the Cimmerian



Deluxe Solitaire (for Windows)

N.L. STADIUMS DISK: This supplemental disk requires ownership of *Tony LaRussa's Ultimate Baseball* to use and adds all 12 National League stadiums to the game. IBM ($19.95). Circle Reader Service #31.

TONY LARUSSA'S ULTIMATE BASEBALL: GREAT TEAMS 1901-'68 DISK: Expands the team roster by 26 teams (12 National League and 14 American League). IBM ($19.95). Circle Reader Service #32.

SHADOW SORCERER: An arcade game based on the world of DragonLance, the fearsome foursome progress their way through an isometric perspective world (with a sort of *Powermonger* look to it) full of VGA graphics and AdLib/Roland/Tandy sound support. The four characters are controlled simultaneously, which can get quite interesting during the real time combat. Fortunately, the game is entirely point-and-click icon- and menu-driven, with storyline supplements written as "Journal Entries" in well-presented documentation. Circle Reader Service #33

U.S. Gold
San Jose, CA

MURDER!: Agatha Christie (or, for that matter, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) might enjoy a good cerebral challenge like the mysteries to be unravelled in *Murder!* Similar to **Accolade**'s *Killed Until Dead*, this strategy game selects from a data base of around three million cases as the player searches the house, interrogates suspects and picks up clues. Only two hours are available to solve each case. Interestingly, the documentation includes some descriptions of some of the most bizarre and highly publicized murder cases of the past 100 years (morbidly fascinating reading). IBM ($44.95). Circle Reader Service #34.

Virgin Games
Irvine, CA

CONAN THE CIMMERIAN: Using a system which combines elements of action and role-playing games, this "saga as game" retraces the early years of Conan's adult life. In search of vengeance for the destruction of his village, Conan must explore 200+ locations in Hyborea in order to learn the sorceries which will help him fulfill his quest. IBM ($49.99). Circle Reader Service #35.

Winware
Dallas, TX
(214) 458-0540

DELUXE SOLITAIRE (FOR WINDOWS): Forty solitaire card games (few look familiar, but all look challenging), beautifully rendered for a Microsoft Windows environment make this an enjoyable PC diversion. Games include: Railroad, Chessboard, Scorpion, Spiderette and many others. With on-line instructions and user-adjusted graphic designs, players can while away many hours playing these solitaire card games. IBM ($30.00). Circle Reader Service #36. **CGW**


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Computer Gaming World's
Top Ad Awards for 1991







This is Rhonda Buryit reporting from New Hollywood. Silicon City is all abuzz about this year's *CGW* Top Ad Awards. Tonight the computer entertainment industry gathers at the *CGW* Crystal Ball Room to find out who will be the winners in the Fourth Annual *CGW* Top Ad Awards.

Last year's big winner, *Strategic Simulations*, won top prize for their "Eye of the Beholder" Ad (#78, pg. 8; #79, pg. 74; #86, pg. 42) which featured a, shall we say, less than romantic heart-throb leading man. In the award winning ad, horror movie kingpin Freddie Undead makes a rude entrance into your living room. Fans loved it. While this reporter wouldn't be caught dead in the same room with Freddie, she does know what the public likes.

As is done each year, the readers of *Computer Gaming World*, this reporter's *favorite* computer game magazine, serve as the jury to pick those ads that stand out as superior examples of the art of computer game marketing. Truly, these are the People's Awards! And, ladies and gentlemen, keep in mind that the reader who comes closest to picking the six winners will receive $250 cash, a lifetime subscription to *Computer Gaming World*, and instant fame! If Larry Fortensky can become an instant celebrity as Mr. Elizabeth Taylor, you too can soar to the heights of computer game society. Send in your votes today!

The Rules

1. Use the Ballot Section of this month's Reader Input Device card located opposite page 16, or a facsimile thereof, to cast your votes.

2. In the "Full Page and Spreads" category, vote for three different full-page and/or two-page spread ads.

3. A two-page spread ad would be an ad that appears on adjoining and facing left- and right-hand pages and is one continuous advertisement. A two-page spread ad counts as a single ad for voting purposes.

4. Select a first place, a second place, and a third place ad.

5. In the "Fractional Page" category, vote for three different ads. These are ads which are less than a full page in size.

6. On the ballot, list the company names and page numbers of the ads you are voting for. For example: to place a first place vote for Acme Company's one-half page ad on page 345, write "Acme pg. 345" on the line for first place in the fractional ad column.

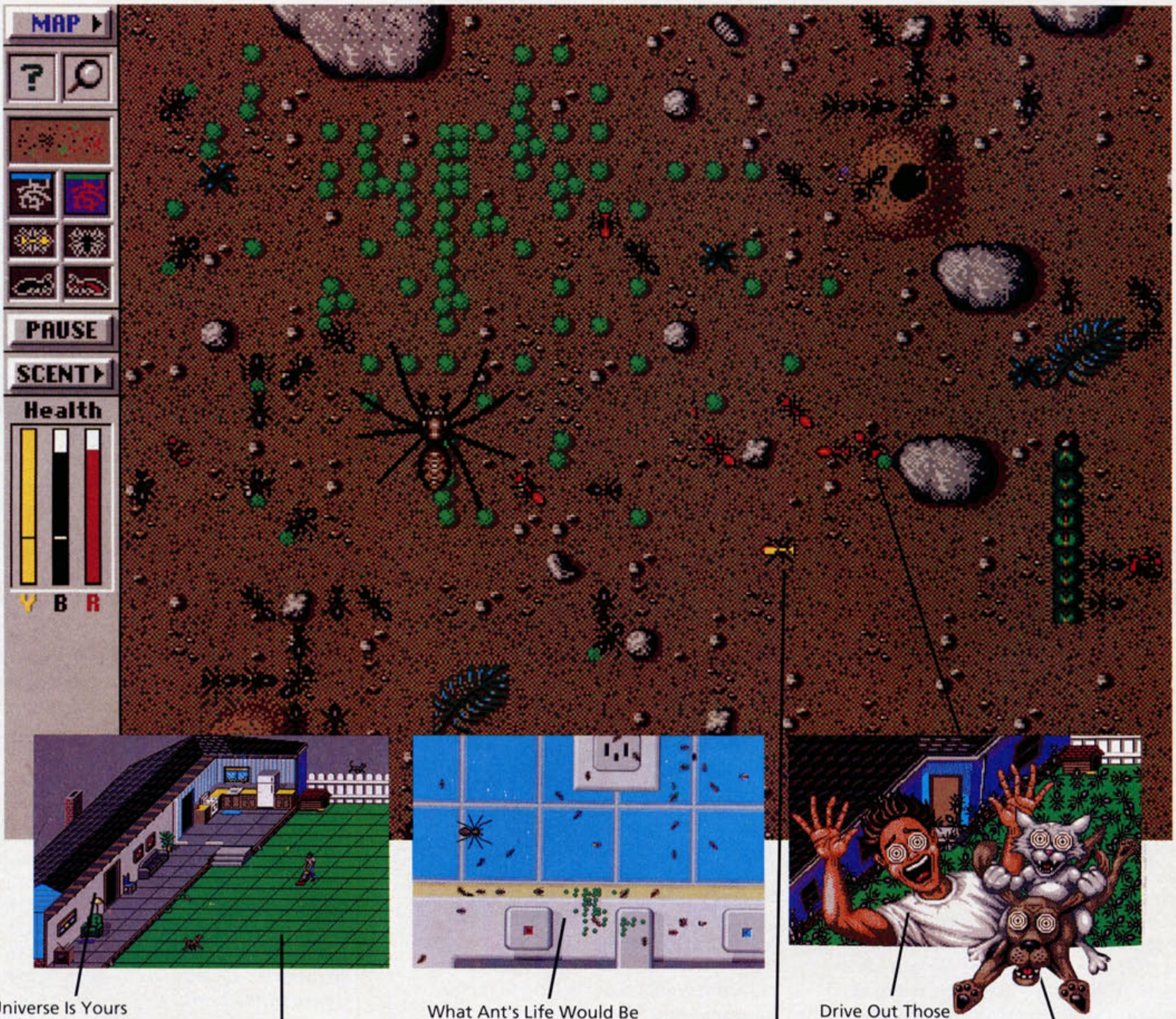
7. The criteria for evaluation are very simple: consider the graphics, copy, and overall impact of the ad.

8. The votes will be weighted, added and then averaged.

9. The reader that comes closest to picking the final correct order of winners will win $250.00 cash and a lifetime subscription to *Computer Gaming World*.

10. Entries must be postmarked by February 1, 1992. No purchase is necessary. Winners will be notified by mail. **CGW**

Walk An Inch In My Shoes



This Universe Is Yours For The Taking.

Each Of These Squares Is A Battle Ground – A Step Toward Universal Conquest.

What Ant's Life Would Be Complete Without A Kitchen To Invade?

Drive Out Those Yucky Humans And Win!

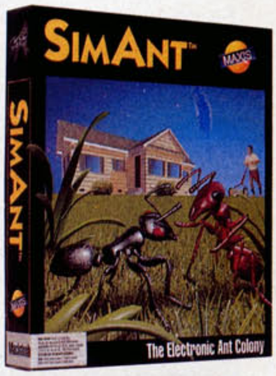
The Yellow Ant Is Your Insect Alter Ego.

Beware The Red Ant Menace – And That Spider's Ready For Breakfast.

I'm an ant. You've stepped on me, poisoned me, cursed me—even held a magnifying glass over me. But do you know what it's like to be me?

SIMANT™ The Electronic Ant Colony puts you in my place. This new game from the creators of SimCity® and SimEarth™ lets you experience life as an ant. Fight for queen and colony. Face hungry spiders and menacing hordes of enemy ants. Endure abuse from those merciless humans. So easy to play even a human can do it — but, based on real ant biology and behavior, **SimAnt** has the depth of play and serious gaming challenge to really drive you buggy. So, before you step on another ant, walk an inch in my shoes. All six of them. SimAnt is available now at your favorite software retailer, or call MAXIS direct at **1-800-33-MAXIS.**

MAXIS





The Rumor Bag

by Ozzy Van Halen

No matter which Hard Rock Cafe a person visits, there is always this feeling that one has entered a limbo where the ghosts of rock's past co-exist with the intense sounds of its present. The one in Chicago was no different. As I walked past the ubiquitous teen-aged sirens like those that surround the portal to every Hard Rock Cafe, the front doors opened and a "wall of sound" that would have made Phil Spector proud surged outward to greet me. I couldn't help but think about **Phoenix Technologies**' new license for the **Disney** *Sound Source*. The deal lets the publisher of the famous *Phoenix BIOS* provide sound support through over 250 different clone makers. **Phoenix** will provide schematics for clone makers to build their own sound chips, or can build chips to specification or package the existing add-on with clone computers.

Stepping inside the restaurant, I immediately began to scan the crowd for my source. I quickly spotted the green-eyed vixen *[Ed: We accept no responsibility for the Rumor Bag Guy's incorrigible sexism.]* as she stood next to the old-fashioned gasoline pumps in the lobby. The clear bulbs at the top of each gasoline pump had been adorned by the addition of lava lamps, so I greeted her with a witty, urbane comment about dueling nostalgia. She politely chuckled and suggested that "Dueling Nostalgia" might be a good title for **Three-Sixty**'s upcoming WWII version of *Harpoon*. Since the working title for the James F. Dunnigan design is *Victory At Sea*, I told her she would have to find another product to label with the nostalgia title.

As the Hard Rock's hostess led us to our table, we passed a considerable amount of rock memorabilia. We barely noticed a "Temptations" poster, some guitars from "Judas Priest," and a gold record from "Van Halen." I suggested that about the only item missing was a gold disk from one of the Fat Man's computer game soundtracks. She smiled knowingly and told me that George Sanger (a.k.a. The Fat Man) was working on a soundtrack for a hush-hush project from **Virgin Games**. It is supposed to be a puzzle-based CD-ROM game that will be 100% rendered in SVGA mode. Its working title is *Guest* and it is expected to be a full 400 MB game. "They're hoping it will be the next generation in computer games."

The reference to the next generation stirred a different image in my mind and I couldn't wait to share with her about **Spectrum HoloByte**'s *Star Trek: The Next Generation* license. The company has the rights to publish games based on the popular television series for use on personal computers, dedicated game machines and CD-based formats.

She laughed and said that Gilman Louie had travelled full circle. I knew that she was remembering the **Spectrum HoloByte** CEO's early *Starship Commander* on the Apple II. She went on, however, to talk about how game design in general seemed to flow in cycles. "For example," she noted, "**RAW Entertainment**'s tentatively entitled *Conquistador* is supposed to have elements of *Empire*, *Pirates* and *Seven Cities of Gold* all rolled into one Amiga, Atari ST, C-64 and IBM game."

Maybe it was the fact that one of Madonna's gold records was hanging on the wall beside her or maybe it was the proximity of such a virile journalist at the same table *[Ed: We also accept no responsibility for the Rumor Bag Guy's delusions.]*, but this normally sophisticated and intelligent professional woman suddenly spoke simultaneously with the unhindered enthusiasm of a teeny-bopper and the sensuous passion of a *femme fatale*, "Ooh, who is that?!" As soon as I realized that she was not referring to the visage under my bag, I glanced beyond our table and saw the exotic good looks of a man who resembled a familiar film star.

"I don't know who it is," I answered, with obvious disappointment in my voice that I couldn't maintain her interest even for the duration of a meal. "It looks sort of like Omar Sharif, doesn't it?"

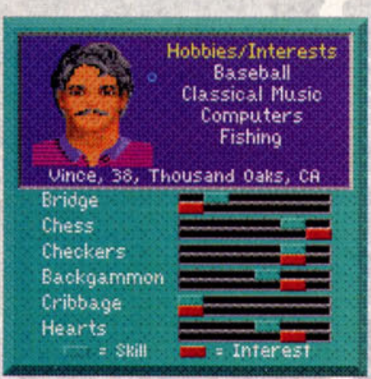
"Ooh," she responded with that libidinous exuberance that seemed so misdirected when it wasn't aimed at yours truly *[Ed: See, there is a poetic justice in these stories.]* "I hear that **Interplay** has agreed to publish a bridge game with Omar Sharif. Do you think I could meet him?" She punctuated her question by running her fingers lightly up my arm and touching my neck below the edges of my bag....

Maybe it was the proximity of George Michael's sweatshirt or the presence of such a vibrant, vivacious woman at the same table, but I kissed her hand through the recycled paper bag I wear over my head and slyly said afterward, "Well, there goes my chance to be appointed to the Supreme Court."

"Supreme Court?" she chided, "Why, if all your sources got together, you couldn't be appointed to a *jury*!" She suddenly became serious. "By the way," she continued, "You know that computer game your magazine reviewed last issue, *Objection!*?" I nodded. "It's been accredited for nine full continuing legal education credits by the State of California."

Why should I care? I had just been psychologically stripped down to my legal briefs. *[Ed: Fortunately, the Rumor Bag Guy manages to get the stories before he humiliates himself.]* **CGW**

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(Actual TSN Screens shown)



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Spanish Knights

Virgin's Vengeance of Excalibur

by Stefan Petrucha

TITLE:	Vengeance of Excalibur
SYSTEM:	Amiga, IBM, Atari ST, and Macintosh
PRICE:	$49.99
PROTECTION:	None
DESIGNERS:	Robert Clardy, John Coonley and Alan Clark
PUBLISHER:	Virgin Games Irvine, CA

Many have tackled the tales of Arthur and his knights, with varying degrees of success. Rather than tread such well-worn ground, **Virgin Games** took a unique tack with *Spirit of Excalibur* by setting it in the period following Arthur's death, during the reign of his little-known heir, Constantine. Now, the saga continues.

Though he took great pains to prove himself in *Spirit*, *Vengeance* leaves the new king out of the running. In fact, the opening sequence places Constantine in a magical stupor, while the Arthurian relics (Excalibur among them) are whisked off into the night by a Demon Lord. The wicked, though perhaps capricious, deed sends the noble roundtablers scurrying across Europe to locate the treasures. The player, after selecting four worthy knights (some of whom may be chosen from *Spirit*) shortly docks in Iberia (the Spanish Peninsula for post-industrial types) where, amidst warring armies, agitated Moors and masochistic monks, the desperate search begins.

It is not an open-ended search, however. *Vengeance*, like its predecessor, is structured as a series of "episodes," each of which must be completed in order. As a result, there aren't a lot of surprises. One has only to read the *TV Guide*-style episode summaries in the rule book to know where the story is headed.

The advantages to such a system are more subtle. In a standard open-ended setup, plot progression is tied to geography (i.e., one must complete Castle A to get Key B to open Castle B, etc.). Episodes bear a closer resemblance to story chapters. They also permit the entire game world to change from episode to episode. Hence, different "chapters" can have different subplots, characters, and, potentially, stronger plot progressions.

Sadly, on this level, *Vengeance* does not compare well with its predecessor. In *Spirit*, Constantine's efforts to prove himself in the shadow of Arthur had a dramatic "oomph" and the episodes involved a refreshing variety of mini-plots that gave the game something of the feel of the original Grail stories. Here, however, the episodes aren't very interesting at all and the overall plot is a "Foozle hunt" for the stolen relics, leaving the story, in many ways, in the shadow of the shadow of Arthur.

There is also a rather ambiguous morality to the proceedings. After reading a somber description of the "Roles of Faith and Nobility" in the rules, this reviewer was surprised to find his faithful, noble knights merrily slaughtering innocent dwarves in order to obtain their treasure. Lancelot also had no qualms about rifling dead bodies to search for extra gold. One might presume his affair with Guinevere loosened his integrity.

Like the game, the manual has a nice historical feel, but lacks certain details. The background info is nice, but more on the individual knights, the relics and the mythos, would have been ap-



preciated. In addition, while some players may enjoy discovering what spells do, this reviewer prefers having basic playing info "spelled" out.

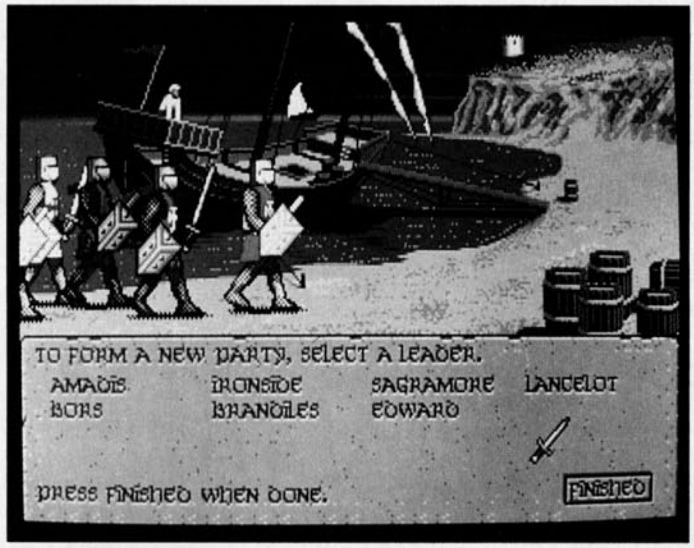
The game engine in *Vengeance* is identical to *Spirit*'s. Play is controlled through a set of on-screen icons. This interface is so extremely well-designed that the highest compliment it can be given is that it doesn't get in the way of game play at all.

As for the graphics — in EGA, they look, well... red. In VGA they look red, too, but it *is* a prettier red and there *are* a lot more shades of it. The EGA text boxes have an ornate typeface that is difficult to read until one gets used to it. The soundtrack, on the other hand, is a pure delight. Many of the themes work well with desperate key clicking and this reviewer often found himself pressing the joystick button right in tune.

Action takes place on three levels: the *map*, for moving from town to town; the *scene*, where individual encounters take place and *army combat*, for the obvious.

At the *scene* level, knights appear on the left side of a local background. Occasionally, one knight will get crowded half off the left border, creating an amusing "cropped" family portrait feel. There's an appropriately "flat" look to these graphics, giving them a subtle resemblance to the tapestries and woodcuts of the period. NPCs, friend or foe, appear screen right. If friend, the NPC will repeat his little animation sequence while talking in text boxes. This reviewer was particularly amused by several monks who periodically beat themselves in the face with wooden boards.

If a foe, the figures automatically meet center screen for un-



avoidable individual combat. Though the manual claims there is some strategy involved, this reviewer could not find it. The player can control the lead knight's sword strokes (two types of attack, swipe and jab), but a rapid, random succession of button presses seemed the most effective. Although various commands can be issued to different characters, including the use of spells and objects, combat was often over before any such commands could be issued. (**Game hint:** Brandeleis, while he has a lot of cash, is a lousy fighter with a low sense of self-preservation. Keep him in the back.)

The scene level also provides an occasional "maze" to wander through, represented by a series of backgrounds with varying exits and entrances.

The *map* level, as one might guess, provides a map of the immediate area. It is here, in this elegant overview, that *Vengeance* achieves its greatest success. While the player moves about, all across Iberia, armies and NPCs also move about, independently warring, conquering and killing. This is a world constantly in motion, a situation continually degenerating. The player's attempts to avoid stronger forces, reach certain locations before certain NPCs do, and complete specific tasks in time, provides a sense of immediate, impending doom which, alone, makes the game worth playing. The ease of failure in such instances requires saving early and saving often.

When armies collide, an *army combat* screen is provided. The player has a few options for his forces, but superior forces beat inferior forces, often with or without player participation. *Vengeance*, it seems, only creates the illusion of combat strategy. There is, however, strategy on other levels. As in life, it's crucial who one picks to be his friends (or in this case, who one pays to be his mercenaries).

In the end, the final battle is disappointing. Once the appropriate objects have been obtained, the main villain goes down like a house of cards, while the closing sequence is an uneventful series of text screens and still pictures that rattle off how nice it is to save the world.

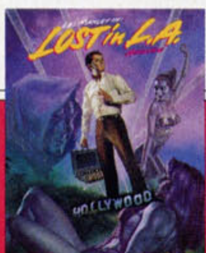
So, it is a mixed bag, but even where it fails, *Vengeance of Excalibur* does so in intriguing ways. If you are looking for some tense real-time running about, with a potentially interesting gaming structure, give *Vengeance of Excalibur* a shot. If plot, character development or combat strategy are your pleasure, a heartier mead might be provided elsewhere. **CGW**

Les Manley in: Lost in L.A.

"SHE STOOD NAKED,

HER WET BODY BATHED IN BEVERLY

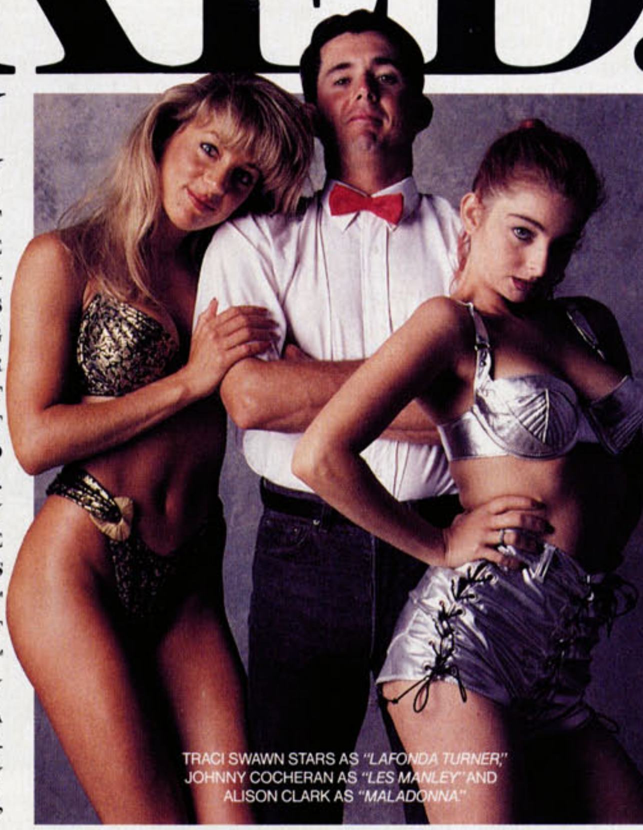
HILLS MOONLIGHT. THE STRANGER CREPT OUT FROM THE SHADOWS TOWARDS THE POOL. LIKE THE STARLETS WHO HAD VANISHED BEFORE HER, SHE WAS OBLIVIOUS TO HIS MENACING PRESENCE. HER SCREAM WAS NOT HEARD." THE HIPPEST STARS IN HOLLYWOOD ARE BEING KIDNAPPED. AND ONLY ONE MANLEY CAN SOLVE THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY. *LES MANLEY IN LOST IN L.A.*™ PLUNGES THE HERO OF *SEARCH FOR THE KING*™ INTO A MEGA-MYSTERY THAT SPANS ALL OF LA LA LAND. MEET GORGEOUS BABES, BODY BUILDERS, ROCK STARS, OUT-OF-WORK ACTORS— ALL FULLY ANIMATED AND DIGITIZED IN AWESOME 256 VGA CALIFORNIA COLOR. HERE'S A REALITY CHECK (LIST) ♦ LIVE VIDEO FOOTAGE OF REAL ACTORS AND ACTRESSES ♦ A POWERFUL PLOT AND DIALOGUE FROM A PROFESSIONAL SCREENWRITER ♦ REAL COOL CHARACTER SCALING WITH FULL ANIMATION ♦ ROCKIN' L.A. SOUNDTRACK WITH TOTAL MUSIC & SOUND BOARD SUPPORT ♦ REAL L.A. LOCATIONS—FROM HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD TO MULHOLLAND DRIVE MANSIONS ♦ REAL EASY 100% POINT & CLICK CONTROL ♦ SO IF YOU WANT A HOT STORYLINE, A SHOT TO SOLVE A MYSTERY AND THE GLAMOUR AND GLITZ OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, GET *LOST IN L.A.* LIKE IT'S TOTALLY REAL, DUDE. TO ORDER, VISIT YOUR FAVORITE RETAILER OR CALL 1-800-245-7744.











TRACI SWAWN STARS AS *"LAFONDA TURNER,"* JOHNNY COCHERAN AS *"LES MANLEY"* AND ALISON CLARK AS *"MALADONNA."*

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The Vices and Virtues of Virtual Reality

Notes on the 2nd Annual Virtual Reality Conference and Exhibition, San Francisco, Sep. 23-25.

by Tony Reveaux

Virtual Reality: Does this buzzword stand for "Vapid Ruminations" or "Very Rad?" Totally immersive, real-time interactive 3-D environments designed for control by a single user are the shape of the ultimate gaming world. So far, VR games have been mostly in the form of prototypes. A measure of how far VR has come in one year can be seen in the activities at the Virtual Reality Conference. Last year, it was mostly speculative talk. This time, the action was in interface design, entertainment and marketing. With advances in processing power, compression and control, the technology is catching up to the visions.

Several important conclusions can be drawn from the series of conferences and panel discussions: The computer gamer will be the first to drive VR; we'll probably be introduced to VR in theme parks and it will be the Japanese consumers who will enjoy it in the home before we do.

Dr. Diana Gagnon of **Interactive Associates** (New York, New York) looks to computer/video game players as the first to actively embrace VR opportunities: "They are very sophisticated, and will be the first users of VR home entertainment products." Both she and Steve Glenn of **SimGraphics Engineering** (Pasadena, California) agree that before VR enters the home, gamers will first encounter VR via Location-Based Entertainment (LBE) experiences located in public places.

One of the most active, and better financed, directions in VR development is theme park installations. LBE in theme parks will, at least initially, be passive VR. As in existing installations, viewers will join others in a multiple-seating module that will be the focus of the VR experience. Douglas Trumbull's **Berkshire Motion Pictures** produced "Back to the Future: The Ride" which has opened at the new Universal Theme Park in Orlando, Florida. It uses the Omnimax technology with a fisheye lens, a 180-degree wraparound screen and kinetic effects.

Jordan Weisman of **Virtual World Entertainments** (Chicago, Illinois) showed tapes of their successful "BattleTech" entertainment center. Like the flight simulator — the ancestor of VR — each player climbs into an individual module, or simulator cab. While not full-immersion VR with goggles and helmets, the player can see the futuristic battlefield simulations on a monitor screen. According to Weisman, "BattleTech" centers will be opening up in many other cities in a franchise arrangement.



The feeling during the September conference was that arcades, the most obvious beachhead for serious, full-immersion VR games, was not expected to be in the cards for U.S. coin-op vendors. After looking at the prospects, the arcade companies have passed on VR because viewing helmets would harbor head lice, anything hanging off the module-like helmets or control gloves would be ripped off and an attendant would be needed to fit a player in and get him or her out. (After all, when VR is really working, one exits feeling disoriented and unsteady.)

Since the conference, however, **Spectrum HoloByte** announced a new venture called **Cyberstudio** to produce virtual-reality software for LBE. Using the **Virtuality** entertainment system manufactured by **W Industries** in the U.K., new products will be distributed in the U.S. by **Horizon Entertainment**, the arcade arm of **Edison Brothers Stores, Inc.**

While the few desktop products exhibited at the conference were still in the rudimentary stages or, like **SimGraphics'** *VR Workbench* and the **VREAM** *Virtual Reality Development System*, are designed as developer tools, there is enough activity in VR to offer at least two off-the-shelf control devices. **SimGraphics'** *Flying Mouse* and **Logitech**'s *2D/6D Mouse* let one control not only the axes of 2D space, but also yaw, pitch and roll in the simulated 3-D spaces of VR-land.

Mr. Film (Venice, California) has used **SimGraphics'** *VR Workbench* and other development tools to produce what they call Performance Cartoons. Silver Suzy, for example, is a full-body, detail-rendered, real-time VR figure that one can see without goggles or glasses. One player controls the chromium-skinned Suzy on her surfboard with her graceful movements, and the other player determines the point of view of the VR "camera eye."

Now in its prototype stage, Suzy is seen on a screen via a 7-watt high-definition laser projector now going into production, and will be targeted to a professional and industrial market for presentations. "We are dedicated to eventually bringing a version of it to the home," said **Mr. Film**'s Chris Walker. "It is so brilliant, and the colors are more saturated than you get even in film. Its throw length is limited only by the amount of power pumping the laser."

They have developed other characters, such as HeMan, that may interact with players in combat games some day. "The Eyephone and other wearable interfaces are not where the future will be. They are fun to play around with, but not something every home user would be comfortable with. With a screen display system like Silver Suzy, it is more immediate and 'natural.'"

In Japan, VR games are under development for arcades, computer games and hand-held games. Why the Japanese interest in VR? First, because Japanese consumers are fascinated with gadgets. Second, because the average Japanese household has extremely limited space

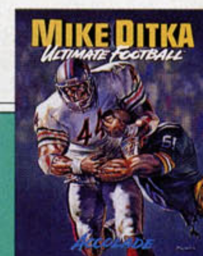
Mike Ditka Ultimate Football

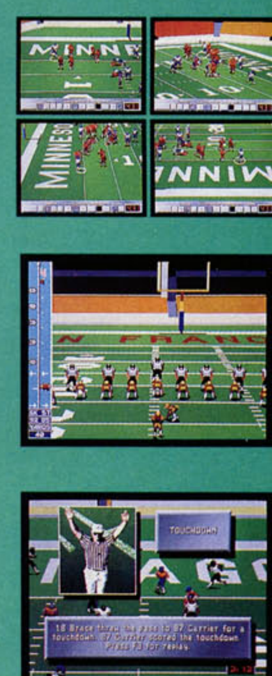
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and home VR devices would enable the visually-oriented Japanese consumers to experience the seemingly limitless spaces of VR's 3-D universes. Third, Japanese households have more than twice the penetration of game machines than do U.S. households. So, Japanese manufacturers are more willing to incur market risk than their *gaijin* counterparts.

Naturally, there is, therefore, a lot of research being directed into VR by Japanese corporations. **Matsushita**, which already operates a VR showroom for their kitchen manufacturing unit, is developing a VR theater in conjunction with **MCA/Universal Studio Tours**, and has licensed technology to **LucasArts, Ltd**. Also, **Sony** is starting a *SonyLand*, a spin-off from its **Columbia Pictures** properties, and seventy other companies are members of an industrial group that is studying VR.

In Japan, the government broadcasting station has formed a company called **Media International Corp.** (MICO), a consortium of 47 companies in various fields that is doing work with Palo Alto, California-based **Telepresence Research**, and is representing them to Japanese companies. **Telepresence** specializes in VR environments and remote presence technologies and applications. Finally, **Fujitsu**'s game machine, the *FM Towns*, is being developed to take advantage of its 386-based processor power for VR applications in home entertainment.



Mr. Film's "Silver Suzy"

Generally speaking, the U.S. is industrially oriented and Japan is consumer-oriented. U.S. consumers tend to wait until standards are in place before adopting a product. Japan is tolerant of multiple standards. Gadget-crazy consumers don't care if a $700 device becomes completely outdated in a year if it was fun to play around with in the meantime. So, because of Japan's consumer focus, there is a great deal of trial and error. Using the consumer marketplace to test ideas is extremely viable in their society, while such a strategy might well be disastrous in the U.S. Ultimately, if a hit product becomes evident, it is picked up by Japanese low-cost producers and then floods the international market. Typically, electronic products introduced in Japan take a year to hit the U.S.

How serious are the Japanese in marketing VR? **NTT**, the Japanese equivalent to **AT&T**, has **The Kenwood Group**, a video production house in San Francisco, completing a 20-minute promotional for a VR home entertainment service that they foresee selling over their phone lines in the near future. "The Touchdown" features an American and a Japanese who strap on CyberCleats to play in a virtual football field and play a 'through-the-air' guitar with a band in front of a virtual audience. **CGW**

Tony Reveaux is a San Francisco-based consultant who serves as the editor of Computer Publicity News *and as contributing editor for* Artweek.

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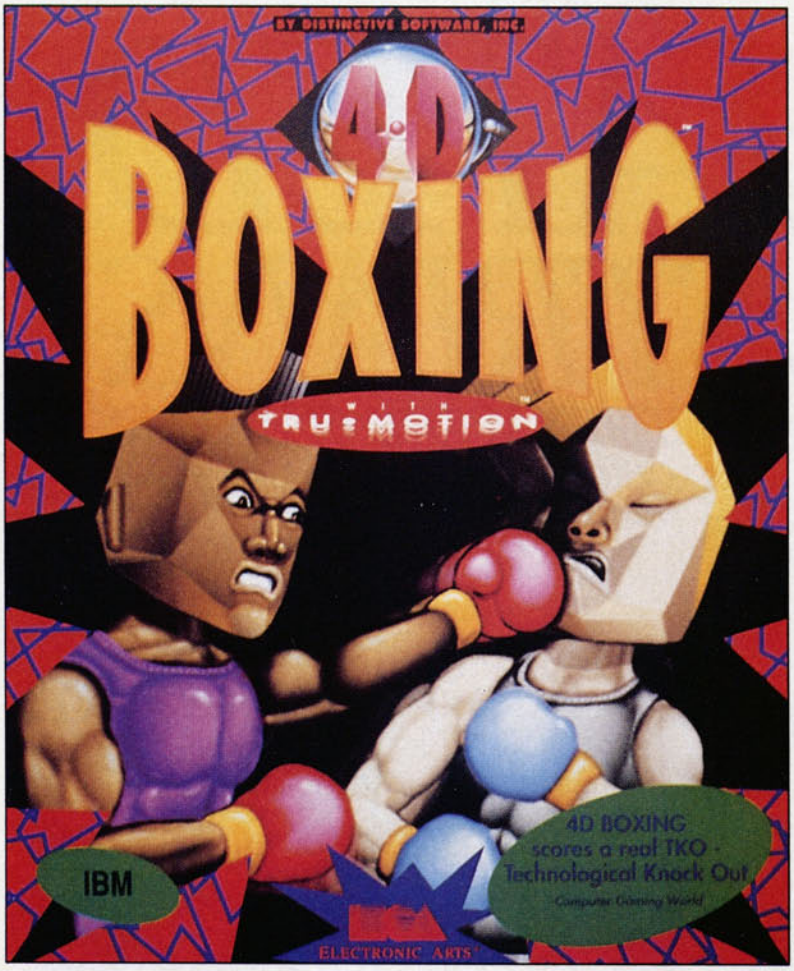






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Champions on a Computer Canvas

Electronic Arts' 4D Boxing

by Wallace Poulter

TITLE:	4D Boxing
SYSTEMS:	IBM
#PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$49.95
PROTECTION:	Document Look-Up
DEVELOPERS:	Distinctive Software
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

Any fan of professional boxing can easily get the picture. The tuxedo-clad announcer strides to the center of the ring and grasps the microphone that drops in from over his head like a deus ex machina *ready to rescue the hero in a Greek comedy. His enunciation, tinged with the Bronx overtones forever associated with the sport, describes the combatants for all of the assembled fans: "In the blue corner, the number 16 contender, weighing in at 219 pounds... a record of 20-0 with 18 KOs from Exeter... The Wol! In the red corner, the number 14 contender, weighing in at 201 pounds and also undefeated... from San Mateo... Ugotabe Kidding!"*

The fighters shuffle together and test each other's strengths and weaknesses, dancing the modern equivalent of the warrior's pre-combat ritual. Astute observers gain some prescient sense of what is to occur and the announcer prepares to describe the second round.

"A bad first round for The Wol as his inexperience at this level shows. Kidding is advancing confidently across the ring and fires a quick combination. The Wol still looks groggy from that first round. Somewhat foolishly, The Wol is continuing forward, maintaining a strong body attack with occasional hooks to the head. A huge right hand from Kidding has Wol in trouble by the ropes, he's down... 1... 2... 3... 4... 5... 6... 7... 8... 9... 10, Knockout! The fine unbeaten streak of the Wol has come to an end at 1:35 of the second round."

The fiction used to introduce this review actually occurred on the reviewer's computer as he suffered his first defeat in **Electronic Arts**' *4D Boxing*. This reviewer's initial reactions were rather negative, but the game itself proved to have even more heart than his fighter.

Such a positive perspective certainly could not have been predicted from looking at the box cover or getting one's first taste of those strange-looking polygon-filled boxers. After five games, however, one becomes perfectly at ease with the graphics. What causes the change? There are two basic factors: familiarity and accuracy. During the action, the punches flow so smoothly and land so correctly that one can readily understand why the polygon choice was made. Once one sees the advantage in terms of the accuracy of physical modeling that is possible through the polygon technology, one overlooks the surrealistic nature of the boxers themselves.



In the Gym (Preparation for Play)

The best way to get into *4D Boxing* is to create one's own boxer. The program provides the gamer with the opportunity to choose the boxer's weight, height, hair color, jersey and shorts color, skin pigment and facial "shape." Then, one can use the "facilities" of the gym to increase one or more of the boxer's skills: speed, power and stamina. In the early going, most players will find that power and stamina are much more important than speed. Stamina, the ability to take punishment and trade inside punches, is vitally important for a beginning fighter. Then, once the gamer has developed some familiarity with the game, it will become possible to develop a "stick and move" fighter such as the great Pernell Whitaker. One will have to master the basic interface, however, before moving to this style.

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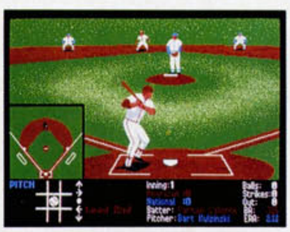
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It takes considerable practice to be able to score sufficient points to win with a "stick and move" approach.

The Main Event (Game Play)

The fighter starts off as the number 51 ranked fighter and moves (one hopes) up the rankings by beating a fighter of a higher ranking. This seems quite a quaint concept, causing one to wonder why the major boxing organizations do not simply take a page out of *4D Boxing*'s book! (grin!)

The top 50 fighters are a punster's delight. Lance Boil, Sadie Mazo-Chisholm and others add a silly side to this product, but one should not make the mistake of thinking that this is a silly product. Players will need a lot of skill and, ultimately, an understanding of the strategies of boxing in order to be successful. This is *not* a *Low Blow*-type of game.

Trainer Talk (Strategy)

As one's boxer climbs the rankings, it is profitable to look for the fighter with the lowest stamina rating. Naturally, these are the easiest to knock out.

Never forget that the body is an easier target than the head and that boxers can still score effectively while in close. Indeed, though this reviewer is not *entirely* certain, but it seemed that a counter punch thrown correctly scored more effectively than a regular punch.

Combinations are important. The jab is only an effective weapon if it is used with a second or third punch. Remember to mix it up with both head and body combinations. Mike Tyson was particularly effective in his early career by doubling up a right hand to the body and then to the head. It is very nice to see that work in the *4D Boxing* program.

Indeed, the more one plays this game, the more one sees that for all its "game" trimmings, this is, in fact, a very accurate boxing simulation.

Television Coverage (Camera Angles)

This is an option which this writer used very infrequently. The program provides nine different camera angles from which to view the fight. This can be an effective learning tool. It is particularly useful for replaying a round of action and picking up tips and pointers.

Another one of the nice touches that this product delivers is the ability to see the fight, while one is fighting, from any of these camera angles and through either fighter's eyes. As the manual notes, "This is a good way to look at your opponent close up.... You can really tell when he's about to go down. It's also a rather interesting view if you get knocked down." They are not kidding — there is a very weird sensation when one's boxer drops to the canvas.

Press Coverage (Newspaper Headlines)

After the decision of the fight is announced, the last couple of seconds of the fight are displayed against a newspaper format background with suitable headline ("TKO Stuns Crowd"). Whoever thought of this delightful piece of chrome is a "genius." Although it is just a five-second piece, it adds a considerable amount to the atmosphere of the game.

Counter Punches (Critical Remarks)

At the risk of being called a purist, the reviewer must question the idea of a fight scheduled for eleven rounds. One usually has fights set at ten rounds, twelve rounds (the current championship distance) or even fifteen rounds (the traditional championship distance), but not *eleven* rounds.

The manual also says, "All amateur and professional boxing matches use 3-minute rounds." While this may be true in the United States, it is not necessarily true in other countries (most notably in the United Kingdom).

The Decision of the Judges

Many serious boxing aficionados may well be put off by the "unrealistic" graphics. Those who get past that reaction and experience the smooth, realistic *motion*, however, will find an enjoyable product that will entice them to return on a regular basis. *4D Boxing* is an excellent and thoroughly enjoyable game with an effective representation of boxing skills. *4D Boxing* scores a real TKO — Technological Knock Out — and should be a welcome and often-played addition to any sports game library. **CGW**

Heavyweight Contender

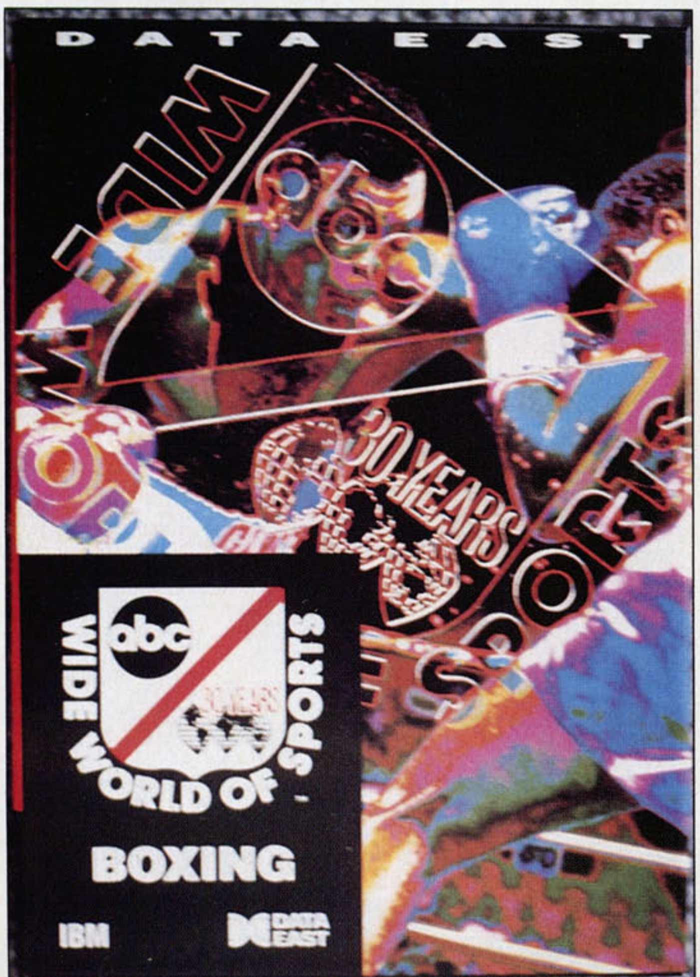
Data East's ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing

by Wallace Poulter

And Round One begins.... Black Adder comes out confidently and meets Bruiser Bilotta at ring center. Adder fires a crisp left jab which scores. Adder fires another jab, and a third, all scoring effectively. Bilotta ducks inside a fourth jab only to be met by a straight right. Sensing that Adder is already on his game, Bruiser fires his own jab, but Adder comes downstairs with a punishing right cross to the body. Bilotta winces from the blow and Adder has found the weakness he was looking for. Blow after blow rains into the mid-section of Bilotta and down he goes. The referee counts to five and Bruiser rises defiantly, but it seems only a matter of time. Again, Adder starts off with shots to the head and then pulverizes the body, looking for weakness. Down goes Bilotta a second time. There's the five count, but again he rises. This time, however, there is no escape. Black Adder rushes in, eschewing defense, as he looks to finish off his man. Punch after punch, pounding with the incessant meter of Bilotta's own pulse, comes in. Adder meticulously searches for the finishing blow. Finally, a solid right cross does the trick and Bilotta goes down for the final time. Adder wins on a TKO due to the three-knockdown rule.

TITLE:	ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing
SYSTEM:	IBM
PROTECTION:	Document Look-up
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Michael Knauer, Jerry Albright and John Cutter
PUBLISHER:	Data East San Jose, CA





Feel-Out Round (Introductory Matters)

ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing is a hybrid action/strategy/role-playing game that allows players to create a customized boxer from scratch and direct his entire boxing career — both in and out of the ring. Not only does the game rely on performance in the ring, but upon money and personnel management. *ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing* offers a unique perspective in taking the boxer from the "Who is Joe Balogna?" stage through the "Who can *beat* Joe Balogna?" stage.

During the boxing action itself, the fighters are viewed from a side-on perspective. Ring movement is simulated by a dynamic background and it is easy, for example, for fighters to find themselves on the ropes. So, even though a full view of the ring is not available, the tactics which make use of the full ring are accessible. The selection of punches is limited to a modest assortment: jab, cross, hook and uppercut. As for the on-screen figures, note that both of the fighters, as well as the referee, are modelled off the same actor. Various hair, and skin tone styles have been rendered onto this digitized base.

This game might well be entitled "Cutter's Revenge!" A couple of years ago, the present writer spoke to John Cutter at **Cinemaware** concerning their *TV Sports: Football* product. While John may not remember the call, it appears that this reviewer may have made a tactical error in describing the original version of *TV Sports: Football* as "easy." During the interview, upcoming plans for *TV Sports Boxing* were discussed. The latter, alas, never appeared, but *ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing* is a soulmate to that design, and it is intriguing to see the number of **Cinemaware** alumni (like Cutter and Jerry Albright) who were involved with the design. Maybe John did remember that "ancient" conversation since, under no circumstances, could this game be called "easy."

Caught on the Ropes

In fact, it is flat-out challenging. The joystick controls do not feel intuitive and it takes five or six games to master an accurate jab. Hence, setting up styles and combinations that work will take a number of fights to perfect. Nevertheless, the wait is worth it and the game functions become instinctive.

More important is the way boxing as a whole is portrayed in the game. In the '50s, boxing was a major sport, with the world champions known to most sports fans. Today, boxing receives coverage somewhat behind midget lawn bowling and full-contact croquet. The multiple sanctioning bodies and expanding divisions have a lot to do with that but, more important may be the overall sleaze factor associated with the movers and shakers of the sport. Individuals such

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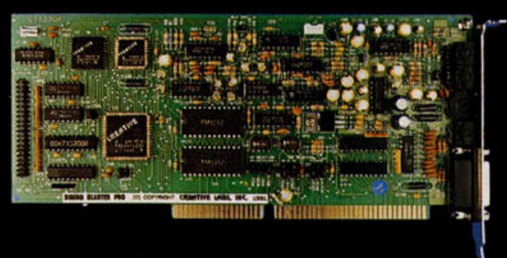
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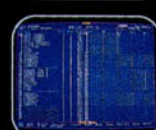
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as convicted felon Don King control the major fighters and the outside actions of Tyson and others have left a bad taste in the mouths of many.

ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing embraces this sleaze. The fight managers are characters like Don McQueen, "Very flamboyant and powerful. He is untrustworthy and will do anything for a buck," and Fifi Lamore, who refers to her fighter as a "big stud." On a personal level, this critic finds that these characters detract from the overall product. However, they do not detract from the game *play*.

Middle Rounds: Picking Up the Pace

The game offers enough options when creating a fighter that it is possible to create widely different fighters in skill and style. Each fighter has a base of points allocated for such attributes as Power, Defense, Stamina, Cuts, Chin, etc. Experimenting with these settings shows one of the strengths of the product. Every type of fighter from a stick and move dancer to the slowest slugger can be created.

One note of strategy — for all their differences, Muhammad Ali and Mike Tyson have/had one thing in common: incredible hand speed. Unless one is a superb counter-puncher, the setting up of an accurate jab is vital to the success of any fighter. Hand Speed and Reach are important.

Counterpunches Score

There are a number of small problems in the program. For example, during a fight, a fighter will be cut on the right side of the face. Nevertheless, when the decision is announced, the cuts are likely to be shown on the left. Further, a fighter can receive a rank of 65,526, obviously somewhat lower than one would expect even the amalgam of fast proliferating sanctioning bodies today could manage to create. Of course, with the confusion in boxing today, that might entitle the fighter to a title shot!

Piling Up the Points

Practice, practice, practice. It is the only way to get any experience. Use the exhibition option to learn the ropes. Use the jab to set up combinations. Learn how to exploit a weakness and, most importantly, learn defense. It is impossible to load up on every attribute and the computer-controlled player will search (but not cheat) for the weakness.

Going for the Knockout

The "Wide World of Boxing" magazine (documentation) provides a number of features including rankings, schedule, results and classifieds. These are, of course, provided to give the career option more definition and substance. In this they succeed. Fighters move up and down the rankings constantly. Smart players will keep notes of how to beat a fighter, such as the body attack against Bruiser Bilotta, so that as one's opponents move up in the rankings, it will occasionally be possible to fight a rematch to improve one's own position.

A Strong Final Round

Data East must feel somewhat like Carl Lewis at the World Track and Field Championships in Tokyo. Lewis broke the world record in the long jump, but still finished a very close second. If this product had been released a week earlier it would have been the *champion* boxing game on the market with no close contenders. Now, one would be remiss in ignoring the fact that the boxer's movements are inferior to the action in *4D Boxing* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), but the career options and resulting emotional involvement in the boxers created for *ABC's Wide World of Sports Boxing* make the latter somewhat superior. Regardless, boxing aficionados may spend as much time arguing about which computer game is best as they do about who will win the next heavyweight championship. **CGW**

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The real treasure... is to be backgrounds, charming dialogue and a continuously

Gamers who believe that pirates are glamorous figures who cut a bold swath through history and experience plenty of thrills and romance will be as disappointed with *The Secret of Monkey Island II: LeChuck's Revenge* (*MI2*) as they were with *The Secret of Monkey Island*. This reviewer has played *MI2* and it is no "Captain Blood" (the movie, not the science-fiction game).

On the other hand, those of us who reveled in the funny, rollicking, politically correct and sometimes, self-deprecating satire of *The Secret of Monkey Island* are going to positively adore *MI2*. Those of us who relished the musical score of the original, are going to positively savor the new reggae soundtrack of *MI2*.

The insult humor that seemed so apropos to the first encounters of Guybrush Threepwood and seemed so glaringly absent in the denouement of the story on "Monkey Island" itself, is back three-fold. Not only is insult humor still the vital ingredient for effective swordsmanship, but there are three different "insult sets" to be encountered and assimilated on the three different islands Threepwood will explore during the game.

Makin' Whoopee

Talk about not living happily ever after... Guybrush has not only lost the love of his life (Governor Marley), but has also outlived his fifteen minutes of fame. He *tries* to tell folks what a brave, courageous ghost killer he was, but everyone yawns and tries to interrupt him (and shut him up) whenever he does. Fortunately, he has a plan. Before one can get too serious, however, the game gently pokes fun at itself. The narration informs the player that Guybrush has switched to a more dramatic posture. Then, he tells his companions that he is after the treasure of "Big Whoop." Unfortunately, the next plot development discovered by the player is that the treasure is not only on another island than Scabb Island (where he currently resides), but that a penultimate bad guy (PBG?) named Largo forbids anyone from sailing away from the island.

The basic thrust of the game is getting to the treasure of "Big Whoop." To do so, Guybrush has to assemble four pieces of a map and this, in turn, requires peregrinations to three different islands. Each island, of course, has its unique geography which is accessed via the "sky-cam" view used in the original *Secret of Monkey Island*.

By the time Guybrush travels to even a few locations on the island, from the Swamp Rot Inn to the International House of Voodoo, gamers will appreciate the new scanned graphics techniques (see *CGW* #87, p. 32) and the way they add marvelous texture and depth to the backgrounds. It also will not take long for even the casual player to discover that the latest adventure features a host of improvements. The new scaling capability works along with rotoscoped animation to make character movement seem more life-like. Add larger characters on-screen and vertical scrolling to this capability and one gets some very cinematic viewpoints. For example, Guybrush has to dive off Captain Kate's tugboat in order to recover an artifact. The vertical scrolling allows Guybrush to sink...er...dive through about six or seven screens of ever-deepening fathoms of ocean. It is a very effective scene.

Naturally, the addition of light sourcing (so that torches, lanterns, campfires etc. flicker and cast realistic shadows) enables the interior scenes and nocturnal exterior scenes to project the right ambience. Another improvement in the se-

Is an Island

of Monkey Island II: LeChuck's Revenge

L. Wilson



found in beautifully "painted" animated characters, witty evolving interface....

quel is the addition of an icon-based inventory to allow simplified handling of items, tools and artifacts. Ron Gilbert, original designer of the SCUMM system (Script Creation Utility for Maniac Mansion) that drives the **Lucasfilm** graphic adventure interface, and the programming team that keeps the system improving (Aric Wilmunder, Brad Taylor and Vince Lee) have provided a much more stimulating and smoothly functioning environment for gamers to explore than those of its predecessors.

Familiar Faces and Phrases

Fans of the original game will be happy to know that some of their favorite characters from the earlier game are back in the latest adventure: the men of low moral fiber are to be found on Scabb Island (their circus debut did not go so well); the Voodoo Lady has her business on the first island (Voodoo? Who do?); Stan (who has opened a new and completely different, previously owned business) and, of course, former Governor Marley is to be found in a mansion on Booty Island (adding to the non-romantic aspects of the game, Guybrush will have to grovel, grovel, grovel in order to get something very important from his "Ex").

Also, the in-jokes on **Lucas Arts** and the employees at **Lucasfilm** are still present. When one enters the costume shop on Booty Island, for instance, one not only finds the costumes for "Sam and Max," but can get a commercial for the rare Steve Purcell comic book, as well. The islands in the game are still "trademarked" in a spoof of **Lucas Arts** early tendency to trademark even such familiar historical figures as "Nazis" in "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and artifacts such as "Ark of the Covenant." There is also a nifty chuckle when former Governor Marley's guard scares Guybrush when dressed in a LeChuck costume.

The dialogue choices are just as hilarious as they were in the earlier game and it seems like more conversations are available. Conversations such as the one with the men of low moral fiber even offer running gags ("But what does this have to do with performance?") and Guybrush keeps finding out that no one believes that he killed LeChuck.

Another feature of the original game that is still present is the genre spoof. When Guybrush takes a shovel to the graveyard, for example, the program drops immediately into a self-running skit where the weather changes and lightning begins to flash. This is also one of the times when Gilbert has elected to use the "cut scenes" that make the pacing in the sequel even more entertaining.

Of course, *The Secret of Monkey Island II: LeChuck's Revenge* offers some of the "cute" puzzles which are typical to the genre. Some of the puzzle solutions are kind of grotesque, however. For instance, Guybrush tries new uses for a coffin and sees if they will float; discovers that alligators (?) are man's best friend; develops a rat-infested recipe for vichyssoise and, appropriately enough for a graphic adventure based on the SCUMM system and using a piece of code known as "sputum," wins a "spit decision" on one of the islands. Indeed, there are numerous bilious jokes about spit in the game.

Phatt in the Booty

The real treasure in *The Secret of Monkey Island II: LeChuck's Revenge* is not to be found on Scabb, Phatt or Booty Island. It is to be found in beautifully "painted" backgrounds, charming animated characters, witty dialogue and a continuously evolving interface that gets more transparent with every new release. When Gilbert and company design a humorous and challenging adventure game, they mean more than "monkey" business. **CGW**

A P.I. on Mars

Access' Martian Memorandum

by Michael Chaut

As I stumbled toward the window, trying to regain my bearings in the Rembrandtesque shadows of my office, I realized that I must have slept the entire day away in my office chair. Almost getting iced will take its toll on a person and last night was nearly the end of the line for yours truly.



The view from my window didn't help, either. The San Francisco skyline was emblazoned with a psychedelic red that seemed like a Haight-Ashbury leftover — not the normal washed, ruddy hue but a thick malicious deep red, almost the color of blood. Maybe I'm just being superstitious, but who knows... maybe it's a foreshadowing of what's about to come?

TITLE:	Martian Memorandum
SYSTEM:	IBM (VGA, MCGA, 640K and Hard Disk Required)
PRICE:	$59.95
PROTECTION:	None
DESIGNERS:	Brent Erickson and Chris Jones
PUBLISHER:	Access Software Salt Lake City, UT



If You're Goin' from San Francisco

Martian Memorandum, **Access Software**'s latest release, takes the player from San Francisco (in the year 2039) to the farthest reaches of humanity's expansion, Mars. As private investigator Tex Murphy (who originally appeared in the 1989 release *Mean Streets*), the player must question suspect after suspect and witness after witness in order to unravel the web of intrigue, deception and murder which the designers have crafted. Murphy will have to deal with a "booby-trapped" safe, thwart a man-eating snake and conquer quicksand pits.

Over the course of his investigation, it should become obvious to Tex that he will not only have to rescue the kidnapped daughter of his client (Alexander Marshall, the President of Terraform Corp.), but he will also have to recover an ancient Martian artifact that is somehow linked to the missing girl.

Adventure Noir

As one begins *Martian Memorandum*, the player will find his or her character in a dingy, 1940s-style office complete with venetian blinds and an overhead fan. Even though the game takes place in the year 2039, the mood, characterizations and ambience (as created by the original music score) are set in the typical style of the classic '40s-era Hollywood detective movie.

Martian Memorandum is a fairly straightforward adventure game. It has a beginning, middle and an end, as well as various ways to arrive at each juncture. The plot holds together and the story even has a message. One can tell that the designers spent a lot of time developing the storyline before any programming actually took place.

Unlike other games in the adventure genre, the player does not have to be a "nursery rhyme maven" to complete this game. In fact, the game comes complete with an on-line context-sensitive help system. The company claims that there should be no need for a hint book or any desperate phone calls to tech support. To obtain a hint, the player simply selects the HELP icon from the command bar and then clicks on the object that he or she needs help with. Players will note that hints are given at different levels from vague to specific. The first hint is general, subsequent hints are more detailed. If a player wants more information, he or she re-selects the object.

Access continues to make innovations, the most notable of which (in this outing) is Brent Erickson's technique of retrieving mass amounts of compressed data rapidly. He actually has developed a technique of storing more than 24 megs of data in a 7.2-meg space while producing restorations of saved games and screen changes (complete with digitized sounds and graphics) instantly. The game allows the player to visit at least 50 locations and interact with more than a dozen non-player characters. Actors were cast, videotaped, audio-taped and digitized to create all the characters. The sets and artwork are phenomenal. It is obvious that many man-hours went into the design of this product.

The Plot Beckons

Warning: This portion of the article contains specific hints on game play. Readers who prefer to solve puzzles on their own should avoid this section.

The command bar across the bottom of the screen allows the player to initiate ten different actions by using mouse clicks or function keys. As the game begins, all objects found in the office should be inspected (using the LOOK command). The player might even want to try to use the comlink (found in the chair). It will soon become apparent that Tex should visit his new client, Alexander Marshall. During that visit, the circumstances surrounding the case will be laid out; the player's character will be given a list of suspects to investigate and the adventure will begin.

Players should be certain to move Tex to the far left and right of each screen. This is required, since several screens scroll right or left and failing to do so will keep the player from seeing the entire playing field and hence, severely limiting the player's ability to complete the game.

Film for the camera may be obtained from Jocques Sparrow, the photographer. (Note: When looking through the camera, one can


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find references to various Alfred Hitchcock films: *North By Northwest*, *Rear Window* and *Psycho*.)

Players should make sure that they give the rose from the gift shop to Rhonda Foxworth some time during the date at the restaurant. (She will be much nicer after dinner is finished.)

The dagger found at the murder scene should be given to Mac Malden. (This will be needed to lead Tex to the murderer).

After Mr. Alexander's body is found, Tex should go back to his office and search his safe. (What he finds will be very important.)

When in the jungle, the game should be saved often, as the hazards are very deadly. Specifically, the quicksand sequence is very unforgiving. One should make sure that he or she is on a stone before stepping.

Players should make sure that they complete all the puzzles on Earth before traveling to Mars. The addresses for many of the Martian characters will be found on Earth. Players should think carefully about all the items they acquire and look for references to additional locations they may need to search.

The invisible beams in Dick Castro's safe are not impossible to get through, but infrared glasses can be obtained from Bradley Ericson that will make the task much easier.

The key to the game is to get a suspect or witness to answer your questions honestly, truthfully and completely. This is accomplished by either talking with them in a manner that befits the situation, giving them something that they want or passing along something that they perceive as having value. It is also advisable to return and speak to the characters more than once. As Tex attains certain items and clues, the answers which may be given by the NPCs will often change. This reviewer found it helpful to set up an information sheet with characters' names, what they do, who they are, what object they give, what leads they provide and what information they divulge. This tool will help the player to follow a logical course throughout the game. Another sound piece of advice is to take notice of the expressions that witnesses and suspects give as they are questioned. These expressions provide clues as to a character's veracity.

Closing the Case

The on-line help system was really appreciated. Not having to purchase a hint book or frantically call tech support (at the player's expense) to finish the game is a welcome marvel. Perhaps the on-screen hints could be *rated* (i.e. first level, second level and third level), thus more clearly providing the player with an option of how far to pursue the hint.

The game allows the player to select sound and music devices separately. Using the Roland MT-32 for music and RealSound for the speech/sound effects was found to be the most consistent. Overall, it provided a spectacular outcome. Unfortunately, this combination did produce, on occasion, music that was so loud and overpowering that the speech/RealSound was indecipherable. When using the AdLib as the speech/sound device, this reviewer found unreliable results. Some characters sounded spectacular, while others were muffled and barely audible.

The yellow background text, used from time to time to establish the storyline, was very difficult to read. The player is encouraged, however, to read the text throughout the game, as the humor will provide many a chuckle. [Note: **Access** is encouraged to hire a proofreader for reasons that will become increasingly obvious to the players as they move through the game.]

Martian Memorandum produces hours of enjoyment, provides a tremendous challenge and even offers an important message: "Revere life, protect the living things and recycle." The game offers quite a different perspective on Mars than the red planet depicted in the fiction of Edgar Rice Burroughs or Ray Bradbury, but it is definitely a planet worth visiting. **CGW**


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Level 3: A scuba dive through hell. You'll need all your fighting skills to ward off the denizens of the deep, and a sharp mind to search out hidden keys required to open doors to passages leading to the level below. Find the keys and get ready for the hard part – finding your way through the correct doors!
Level 4: The labyrinth bio-lab. Blast your way through hordes of xenomorphs in overhead view. Figure out the path to the central core, plant your bombs and then fight your way to the teleporter before the moon and it's 'morphs are blown to space dust in a flash of sound and fury on your screen!
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Might Makes Right

One hears, if one keeps one's ear to the ground in the proper places, that *Might and Magic III: Isles of Terra* is already a big hit, especially among college-age gamers. There is nothing surprising about this. *Might and Magic III* represents a visible leap forward, especially relative to the first two *Might and Magic* installments, in CRPG design. It is a get-together-and-play kind of game, with plenty to reward both the person sitting at the controls and the people watching over his shoulder.



TITLE:	Might and Magic III: Isles of Terra
SYSTEMS:	IBM
PROTECTION:	Document Look-Up
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Jon Van Caneghem
PUBLISHER:	New World Computing Van Nuys, CA

Show Biz Magic

The interface is a joy, consisting of a 3-D "display" window in which all the action unfolds in real time; a row of face icons, one for each of the up to eight characters in one's party, that allows quick access to the party's skills, possessions, and information; a point-and-click action menu that changes into a combat menu when danger threatens and clever graphic signals scattered around the screen to serve a variety of functions. (For instance, there's a gremlin crouched in one corner of the display window who waves his arm when a secret passage is near.) Combat and movement are quick and the controls are responsive, which in this case makes the difference between a game that would be good but frustrating and one that is actually fun to play.

The game's graphics are as invigorating as Technicolor must have been when it first hit the scene, taking full advantage of a 256-color palette. Even if the soundtrack *is* generic, instantly forgettable fantasy tripe, the sound *effects* (which include a good helping of speech) make up for it. To top it off, there are the game's bells and whistles, which are of an order to elicit the latter — whistles — from surprised and delighted players. For example, the game begins with a full-screen image of arch-villain Sheltem describing in digitized spoken-word audio the menaces which the player is about to face. Also, at the other end of the game, when a player's last character dies, a pair of giant dragon jaws clamp shut over the screen before the final fade to black. For obvious reasons, therefore, this is a game best played in the company of friends — assuming that one's friends appreciate a fine piece of computer game workmanship.

Might and Magic III is a top-of-the-line system showpiece, marrying the aesthetic sophistication of some recent "interactive movies" to the down-and-dirty campaigning of a hardcore CRPG. There is something to please almost every stripe of gamer.

Might Be Trouble

Unfortunately, *Might and Magic III* is also a remarkable exercise in water-treading which does not advance the genre one inch in terms of plot, event or ontology. Here we are again, one realizes, a band of hardy adventurers — elves, gnomes, dwarves, clerics, paladins, sorcerers — tramping about the wilderness and facing off against assorted orcs, rats, bugs, and other stock uglies.

Here we are, once more mapping a corner of Middle Earth, or a reasonable facsimile thereof, in pursuit of yet another necromantic ne'er-do-well with a *faux*-mythic name and a bad disposition. Here we are again — will we never be somewhere else?

It is here that the question of ontology — of what things exist in a given universe — comes up. The ontology of *MM3*, the contents of its universe, includes nothing we haven't seen far too often before. How many games before this one have populated their landscapes with warlike half-orcs, magical elves (who are also, of course, excellent archers), and skulking, lock-picking thieves (here called robbers); with hit points, armor class, and alignment; and with locations bearing such names as "Serpent Wood," "Buzzard Bluff," and "Castle Greywind"?

MM3 even comes with a *Silmarillion*-esque backstory (which doubles as a fairly inoffensive anti-piracy device) describing the epic history of a War Among the Gods (here rendered exceptionally banal by the use of the four elements — Water, Fire, Air, Earth — as the Gods) and the subsequent intercession of some tritely benevolent meta-Gods with names like "Esoterica" and "Cosmonium."

On the other hand, there *is* a market for this stuff. David Eddings rewrites the same high-fantasy novel over and over again and never fails to hit the bestseller lists with it; Piers Anthony, whose work I generally admire, is in the double digits with his series of Xanth novels despite the fact that he ran out of new ideas around number six; and the folks who churn out those game-based novels for **TSR Books** are laughing all the way to the bank. Why should things be different with computer games?

MM3 is a good game — no, an *excellent* game — for the people at these extremes. CRPG junkies who can never get their fill of computer *D&D*, and for whom familiarity is not a turn-off but a selling point, will adore *MM3*. People who have never played a game like this before, but who are even slightly interested, could hardly do better than starting with this one. The only

New World Computing's Might and Magic III

by Charles Ardai



still island-hopping out there somewhere; rediscover the legendary origins and secrets of Terra along with him; and destroy Sheltem once and for all, or at least until *MM4*.

Starting from the small (but representative) town of Fountain Head, the player's party has to go out into the wilderness, search swamp and mountain, town and country, and slaughter, slaughter, slaughter the armies of the night.

Along the way, spellcasters will learn new spells, fighters will pick up new weapons, and everyone will get richer and more experienced. This growth occurs through a series of mini-quests that are mostly handed to the player by NPCs. ("I need help doing thus-and-so," says a shadowy figure. "Will you help? Y or N?")

Each town contains locations where characters can be healed, fed, replaced, armed, trained, shod, or killed. Experienced gamers will need no time at all to get used to this gallery of old haunts. Each town is built on more or less the same plan, if not the same physical layout, with little more to show players than described above. NPCs offer hints and rumors as well as the usual services, but then again, hints and rumors *are* one of the usual services in games like this.

people who will groan at another helping of old chestnuts, no matter how attractive the serving platter, are players somewhere in the middle: ones who have played enough run-of-the-mill CRPGs to want something different.

Fairness dictates that I admit that I fall in the third category. The really remarkable thing, however, is that its gameplay is so entertaining that, for a while at least, I didn't even notice.

A Tale of Magic

For the record, a capsule version of the story might go something like this: In days of yore, when the warring Gods/Elements joined forces to destroy all the world's mortals (who might otherwise have become powerful enough to threaten them), five Forces of the universe took pity and stepped in, giving unto the mortals the variety of powers and skills that would, over generations, develop into character classes. The mortals survived; and when the combat ended, the Forces took the battleground of the Gods and crumbled it into the sea, the result being the thirteen magical Isles of Terra.

Jump to the present: master wizard Corak has gone, alone, on a journey around the Isles to recover the fragments of this primal legend and to throw some kinks into Sheltem's latest scheme, the details of which he cannot fathom, though he knows it has something to do with playing Alignments off one another. All looks bleak until upon the scene appears our merry band of six — pre-rolled or custom-created — adventurers. There are three major tasks at hand for our heroes: track down Corak, who is

Puzzles turn up, after a fashion, most having to do with unearthing something hidden or getting from one place to another. None are especially difficult. Most of the fun in the game comes from ordinary encounters, especially combat, since a lot of energy has been spent on making the graphics and animation interesting. Some weapons and spell effects appear in the display window, even those that do not produce splotches of blood to indicate a successful hit. The faces of the player's character icons change expressions in response to various attacks and get replaced with a tombstone graphic once they have shuffled off this mortal coil. All monsters are well-drawn and at least minimally animated, with unique sound effects for added spice.

The support screens — inventory, status, spellbook — are the most attractive and best organized this reviewer has seen in ages. Access to them is well thought out, since the player can shift from one character to another within any sub-screen. This makes it a breeze to equip the party and exchange supplies among party members.

The game is long enough to fill hours and hours of an adventurer's time and offers varied enough background graphics to keep the eye from glazing over. Whether the imagination is kept similarly active is another matter. For a fantasy game, *MM3*'s story is sadly mundane. So, the gamer who wants to be surprised by discovery, conversation and story is likely to be disappointed in *MM3*, while the gamer who simply wants to *play* may be ecstatic with the game. *Might and Magic III: Isles of Terra* is a stunning new implementation of venerable concepts that should please the majority of its intended audience. **cgw**

Scorpia's Underground Guide to Might & Magic III

The "Isles of Terra" comprise a large area and contain more than a few areas where gamers may go awry. So, CGW's prolific adventure/role-playing expert has provided some guidelines for troubled adventurers.

First Reports (Problems with the Initial Version)

Note: Gamers who purchase the original version of the game may encounter a few problems that others will not. None of them will keep players from being able to finish the game and all of them have been fixed in the current version of the game. Just in case our readers do not want to go through the trouble of getting a new version of the game, here are some quick fixes.

The Greek Brothers: The program does not recognize it when you have talked to Brother Delta in Wildabar. Ergo, when you try talking to Zeta in the Arachnoid Cavern, he will not tell you the number you need, which is 99. It's still a good idea to follow the Brothers through to Wildabar, however, as you pick up several Quatloo coins useful elsewhere in the game.

The Dark Knight Keep: The inscription on Ivory Billow is wrong. The correct instructions are: "Count the secret number with Fire Hood and Desert Breeze. Deduct Frost Wing, Forest Green and Phantom Sorrow. Multiply by Shadow Grave." This will give you the right number to open the way to the two power orbs.

Arachnoid Cavern: Similarly, Lord Luck's instruction is wrong. The correct one is "Multiply by 2" (*not* 52!).

Is There a Lock-Up-Smith in the Dungeon?: There are at least four ways to crash or lock up the game. One is trying for a 77th win in the arena. For whatever reason, the program can't handle a 77th attempt and will die, dumping you to DOS. In the outdoors, avoid the spot F2, X4 Y2. Stepping into this square will cause the game to freeze and you'll have to reboot. Be careful when moving sideways (using CTRL-LEFT ARROW or CTRL-RIGHT ARROW) in castles. Moving in that fashion onto the exit square and answering "no" to the "do you want to leave" question will cause the game to lock up. Finally, if you have your spellcaster(s) set to cast spells during auto-combat, and if the ready spell happens to be a non-combat spell (such as Light, Wizard Eye, etc), and you use the auto-combat feature, the game will lock up when you try to change that during combat. Keep your spellcasters set to fight or block, or else do the first round manually and change the spell at that time.

Vanishing Items: Be careful about handing off excess equipment to a character who remains at the inn. I created Klodd to hold some stuff and free up inventory space in my regular party. We gave him about nine or ten items, including several keys and a couple of evil artifacts. Imagine my surprise (and horror) when we came back later and he had *nothing* in his inventory at all! *Arrgh!* To safely hand off items, take the "item holder" into your party and leave the inn. Give him/her the excess objects, save the game, re-enter the inn and drop the character from the party.

It Won't Work: While most miscellaneous items (cameos, medals, brooches, scarabs, etc.) provide bonuses to armor class, some don't. This is particularly the case with items made of obsidian. I came across several that did nothing for armor class, even though identification at the smithy said they were +20 AC. Always try on such items and check AC before and after to be certain you're obtaining a benefit from them. If there is no change, dump or sell the item.

Party Down

The pre-generated party that you start with is good enough to take through the entire game, although I recommend dropping the Robber in favor of a Ninja, who can fight better. However, if you want more spellcasters in the party, consider having a Paladin or two, an Archer, and/or a Ranger. Clerics, like Druids, are not especially good at combat. On my second pass through the game, I dropped the Cleric in favor of a second Paladin, the Barbarian for an Archer and the Knight for a Ranger. This combination worked *very* well.

Spell Bound

All characters that can cast spells should join the guilds, but not be in a big hurry to purchase all of the spells available. A number of spells can be found in the outdoors, and in some dungeons (most notably, Temple of Moo, Cathedral of Carnage and Magic Cavern). Buy a few spells, then go looking for the freebies.

The best places for goodies are the mountains in Troll Valley, the island of the gargoyles and the swamp island. Since beginning characters probably aren't up to taking on the monsters in these areas, you need to be careful when you go looking for neat stuff.

Stick to the mountains at first. Get the Wizard Eye spell (terrific spell, by the way!). This will show you the immediate area, and keep you from stepping out of the mountains. As long as you stick to the mountains, you are safe, no matter how surrounded you may appear to be. (This does not apply to some areas on the swamp island, where you can run into gargoyles and trolls in the mountains.)

Most of the items you find are randomly determined when you come across the chest or alcove or hole where they're tucked away. (Only spells are the same each time.) So, while the spot they're on will always have something, what's there is not necessarily the same.

Treasure Hunting

One thing you can do is save the game before investigating these treasure troves. Then, if you don't like what you got (or most of it isn't useful), restore and try again. This applies to chests in dungeons as well, except those that hold special items, such as spells, hologram cards, artifacts and Pearls of Youth and Beauty. These chests will always have the same items in them. Also, chests that hold only money (or gems, or gems/money) will have the same amounts.

You also need to be wary of traps. Digging up anything on the Forsaken Sands will cause a Vulture Roc to appear (one *nasty* critter that is tough to hit, tough to kill and easily capable of trashing an entire party in a very short time). There is also a minotaur that shows up when you investigate the goodies buried at F2, X11 Y2 and it has 1000 HP, an AC of 90 and a special instant-death attack. He is, by the way, typical of *all* minotaurs. Figure to yourself that if you can't dispose of him without a lot of trouble, you're not ready yet for the final dungeon (the Maze From Hell).

Digging on Dragontooth Island will *always* set off traps that do a fair amount of damage. Make sure everyone in the party is in good health before messing around in the snow.

While you can reach many places through the use of the teleport spell or the teleporters in the towns, some can only be gotten to by walking on water. This can be accomplished by casting a "Walk on Water" spell, using an item with the Walk on Water spell or wading into the shallows around an island and casting Etherealize.

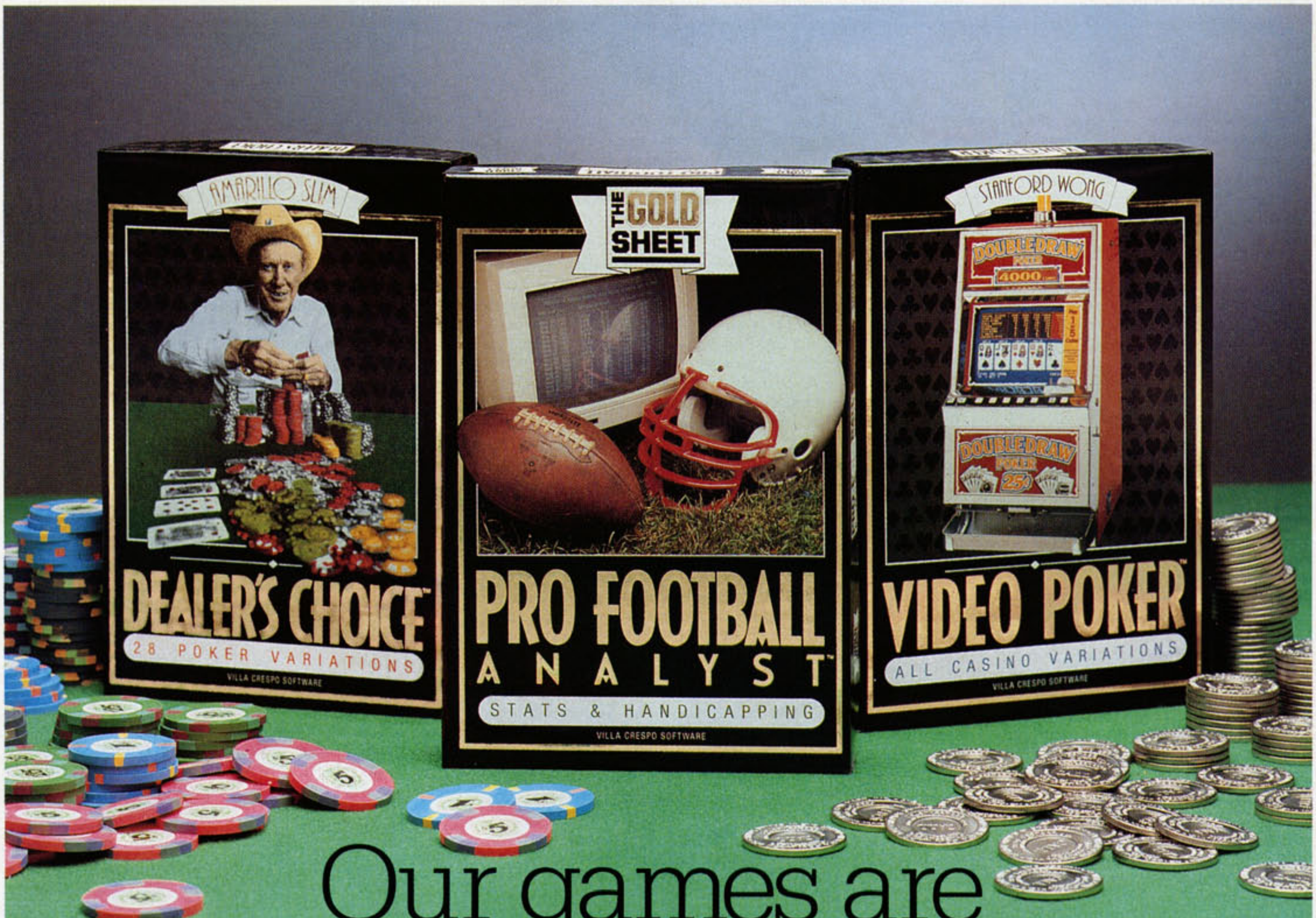
Once you have reached one of these less accessible places, consider setting Lloyd's Beacon on the spot if you plan on returning in the near future. You can set as many different beacons as you have characters with the spell.

This ability also comes in handy when you want to pump up your characters before taking on a mean dungeon. Visit the dungeon location and set the beacon. Go to the statues, wells or fountains (whichever is most convenient at the time), get your stats boosted, then use the beacon to return right to the dungeon entrance. Since the boost will last only until the next dawn (usually), the best time to use this technique is early in the morning.

With regard to other items, it is wise to have items identified at a smithy from the beginning in order to find out their basic properties. After awhile, you will notice certain patterns emerging which should help you decide what to keep. Special materials (gold, silver, ebony, etc.) always add to the protective or combative value of an item in the same fashion. For example, gold always gives +4 to hit, and +8 to damage on any weapon, and +6 to any armor type. Platinum always gives +6 to hit and +10 to damage on any weapon, and +8 to any armor type.

Special-purpose items operate in the same fashion. So, anything with "Leprechaun" in the title adds +30 to luck when equipped, and anything with "Freezing" in the title gives +15 Cold Resistance. The trade-off is that such items do not give any extra protection in armor class or any extra to-hit or damage abilities to weapons. So, Freezing Plate Armor gives +15 Cold Resistance, but only the regular +10 Armor Class protection. A Leprechaun broadsword provides +30 luck, but no to-hit or damage bonuses on the weapon itself. The one exception is when the weapon or armor itself is made of special material (e.g. Platinum Cryo Gauntlets give +25 Cold Resistance and provide +8 AC like any other platinum armor).

What makes things slightly easier is the ability to wear multiple rings and pins



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(brooches, scarabs, cameos, medals, etc). You can wear up to four different types of pins, for instance. So, it's usually better to get your elemental protections and boosts from such items, while going for the high protective values in armor, capes, gauntlets, etc.

Outdoor Survival

There are two types of dungeons: those you can walk into and those that require a key for entry. Typically, the keys for the locked places will be found in one of the open dungeons. The Cyclops cave, for example, has the keys for both the Halls of Insanity (in Evil Eye Forest) and The Dark Knight Keep (red shield on the front).

When you don't have the right key, the game tells you this, and gives you a hint by displaying the word "key" in the same color as the one you need. This is true for all locked dungeons, except the Maze From Hell (in the southern part of Swamp Island); you need the gold key to get in, but the word "key" is displayed in black, not gold.

In the locked dungeons, be prepared for opposites. Cleaning out the front part is often not too hard; but the "rear," where the big-time monsters lurk, can be extremely difficult. For instance, the Mad Dwarves in Dark Knight Keep are fairly easy to kill, but the Jousters are another matter entirely.

Visiting the Great Houses

The castles are important mainly for the experience you receive for handing over orbs and artifacts, but also for picking up some goodies, gems and cash by raiding the chests. Stealing from the chests does not appear to have any effect on alignment for anyone in the party, so go ahead and do some looting. You will, of course, have to fight through the castle guards when you open the chests, but they should not be too tough.

The chests near the thrones are special, requiring a countersign before you even have the opportunity to pick the locks. Each countersign is different, and can be found by going through the dungeons under the castles. Note that using the countersign just gives you a chance to open the chest; the alarms *always* go off when you give the countersign (except in Dragontooth, where the alarm goes off after you pick the lock, or try to). When you open these chests, you are attacked by special guards, who are tougher in some ways than the regular castle guards, so be prepared.

Be sure to clean out all the castles before handing over the vital eleventh orb (you can give orbs to all the kings for experience, but only one can get all eleven). Whichever king receives the last orb — good, neutral or evil — will immediately trash the castles of the other two kings.

All castles have statues or fountains you must visit for the clues to the special words that permit dungeon access. None of these dungeons are places for low-level parties, so don't worry too much about picking up the clues and solving the riddles at the start.

See the Pyramids of Power

The Pyramids can be entered once you have the Gold Pyramid Card from Mount Keystone. A Might of 50 or better is required to break the glass and obtain the card. This will get you into any of the five structures.

One thing to be extremely careful about in any pyramid is what crystals you touch. Some of these will age your party in ways that the Fountain of Youth can't undo. Also, in some unknown fashion, one time more than 30 years passed in the game, aging my team from 22 to 59. This wasn't mere aging; the actual date in the game was 37 years after we had entered the pyramid.

So, save before you go into one, and check the ages of your party, as well as the date, before you save the game anytime thereafter. Generally, you can figure that if you touch something and nothing appears to happen, something actually has happened, and it isn't good. The crystals that give answers, and the altars that boost stats, are always safe. Anything else is likely to be bad news.

The pyramid on the Isle of Fire leads to the end game. You must have the Blue Security Card to pass through the final door. This is obtained by giving the eleventh power orb to the king of your choice.

Staying Alive

Most of the time, it's best to kill something before it gets close enough to beat on the party. Equip everybody who can use one with a bow. You can start shooting as soon as a critter is in view, however far away it may actually be. Use the keyboard for this; by hitting the S key quickly, you can get off two volleys per round instead of one. This doesn't work with clicking on the bow icon, so be sure to use the keyboard.

However, there are a number of monsters out there who have distance weapons of their own: orcs and goblins, for example. Being low-level critters, they are usually not great shots, so it's safe to trade arrows with them. Evil rangers and archers, however, tend to have better accuracy. Get immediately into melee range, instead of shooting it out with them, by using either the Jump or Teleport spells. If your speed is greater than theirs, you will be able to jump/'port right in front of them and get your blows/spells in first. This is also a handy way of dealing with spellcasting monsters (such as wizards and witches), and those like dragons, who have a breath weapon.

Still, there are exceptionally nasty critters that you will have a hard time with, even after you've been to magic wells or fountains and had your stats pumped up. Even with 60th level characters and very high stats (thanks to the Dragontooth statues), it was virtually impossible for my team to take on the Dragon King or the minotaurs in the Maze From Hell.

What you need in these circumstances is the Heroism spell. This is one of *the* most important ones in the game. How it actually works is a mystery, but it will allow you (especially when cast by a high-level Paladin or Cleric) to fight otherwise impossible monsters.

Don't rely on the spells from temples after you've made the necessary donations. It is far better to use your own Heroism on your characters. Do this before going into any tough battle, such as with minotaurs or dragons.

Another important spell is Power Shield. At high levels, this will protect absolutely from Mystic Clouds, liches and the gaze of the Medusae that lurk in the Maze From Hell. It will also protect the party from electrical and energy fields in the pyramids and other places; you can walk right through them without ill effect. Ditto for the weapons wielded by Iron Wizards and Ed-409s. However, it does *not* do too great a job against the Terminators in the final pyramid.

Terminators are virtually impossible to kill with weapons. They are susceptible to spells, though, so use such spells as Implosion, Mass Distortion, Cold Ray, Incinerate, etc. when you come across them, and try to finish them off fast, as they can eradicate a character. Varying the spells you use is better than casting the same ones multiple times.

Protection From Elements is the third important spell. At higher levels, it is *much* better than the resistance you get from the statue in Blistering Heights. For instance, with a Protection From Fire (as cast by a Paladin) active, we walked all over the Isle of Fire without being singed. This included absolute protection from fire breathers such as Fire Lizards and Fire Stalkers. It also works well for walking through the fire spots in Castle Greywind.

At the time we did this, the protection value was 83 (if you check the day/time icon, you will see your active spells and how much protection they are giving you). Protection From Cold will similarly protect you from the breath weapons of the green dragons, except from the Dragon King, who uses some kind of energy breath, from which there is no real protection.

For getting past those nasty pendulums in front of doors, or choppers set up in inconvenient places, or for getting through doors you can't open or break down, the Etherealize spell is what you need. Even when Teleport won't work, Etherealize will, and it takes you right past traps and doors with no damage at all. Very handy, especially in the Whiteshield dungeon, where all the doors have pendulums in front and Teleport always fails (on the way out, conserve spell points by unlocking/breaking the door from inside and then Jump past the pendulum).

Finally, remember that most spells will wear off at dawn, regardless of when they were cast. Putting up a Power Shield or Heroism spell at 4:00 in the morning is a waste of points, as dawn comes at 5:00 AM. Keep an eye on the time, and time your spells to get the most out of them, sleeping if necessary.

Terra, Terra, Terra

If you pay all the heads in the swamps (*except* Betrayer!) the money they ask, you can drop a coin in the Well of Remembrance on Forsaken Sands and be rewarded with a random selection of Neat Items. You may want to save the game before dropping the coin, just in case the selection doesn't please you (heh). Once you do this, the well disappears and does not come back. Even paying Betrayer to make the other statues forget you won't make the well re-appear. Once is all you have, so make the best of it.

Each shell given to the nymph Athea will provide you with 250K experience and 250K gold. Males in the party always go bonkers after a visit to Athea, so it will be necessary to take them to a temple afterwards. There is one exception to this, but I'll let you figure out what it is (heh).

You can obtain gold, items or stat boosts by sitting in one of the thrones in Castle Blackwind or Castle Greywind on the right days. You only have the chance to sit on one throne (per castle), and only one character can do this. Save before trying the thrones, and then decide which one you like best. The day for each castle can be obtained by answering the riddles from the graves on Gargoyle Island. **CGW**

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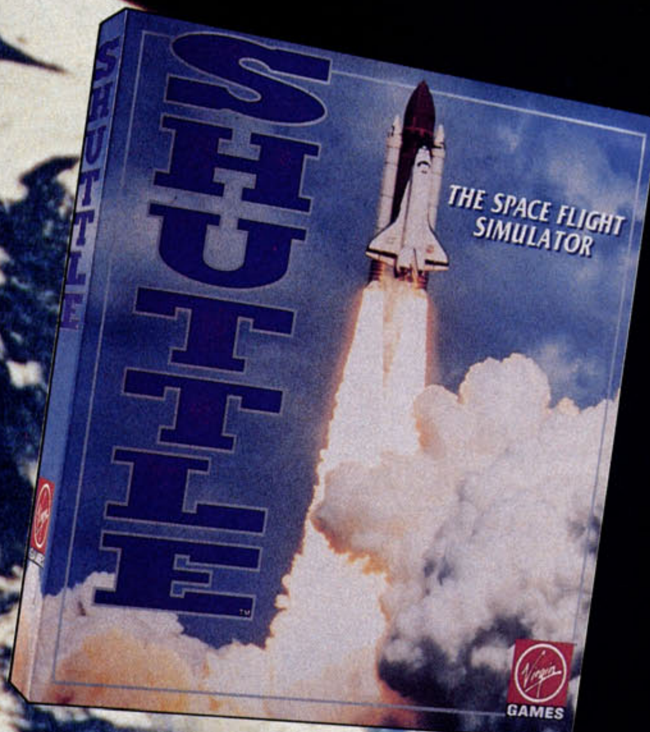
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No More "Spam in a Can"

Interplay's Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space





In *CGW*'s August editorial (#85), computer game designers were challenged to develop a new toolkit in order to meet the design challenges for multimedia games. Apparently, **Interplay** decided to take up the challenge in *Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space* (*Buzz*). To be published as both a disk-based and CD-ROM-based product, the game is likely to set a standard for multimedia entertainment products.

The reasons *Buzz* may set a standard are relatively straightforward. First, the game play itself is based on a well-tested design: *Lift-Off*, a boardgame from **Task Force Games** which has been popular for years and which has enabled the design team to play-balance the game before ever entering a line of code.

Second, the subject matter (the race to the moon) allows the design team to use existing film footage of historical events to dramatize the events. The film footage to be used will not only include the historical results of space missions and high-altitude testing, but will also provide a base of images to be modified in order to present ahistorical results on-screen. Such use should provide a definite sense of "making history."

Third, designer Fritz Bronner has professional experience as both an actor and director. Hence, part of the design philosophy is built around his sense of a cinematic approach combined with a sense of the interactive nature of a game. Whether the player is involved in the research and development stage or one of 58 different types of space missions, the game's goal is to present the events of the space race in such a way that history appears to be occurring before one's very eyes. Add to this the interesting touches of customization, such as the option of having one's own digitized photo pictured on the screen during some of the manned missions, and something of the "show biz" chrome which the product is expected to have should be clear.

Fourth, Buzz Aldrin's provision of expert consultation from the astronaut's perspective will guarantee that astronaut involvement in the game will *not* mean a "Spam in a can" approach. The roster of astronauts available to the player will contain different personalities with different skill emphases. So, a major portion of the decision-making process for each mission will be the right crew assignments for optimal performance.

To the Moon, Alice

Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space recreates that exciting era of space exploration from 1957 to 1977. In the disk-based version, the game will allow players to advance up to the Saturn 1B rocket. The CD-ROM version will allow the player to progress up to the Saturn 5 rocket. Neither version will allow players to build a shuttle program, but an expansion kit for **Jet Propulsion Laboratory** missions may be developed if the initial program is commercially successful.

The game allows the player to be in charge of the space program for either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R., while the computer handles the rival space program. There is also expected to be a modem play option available in which one player can direct the U.S. program while the other manages the Soviet program, but as it stands, the basic game can be either a solitaire experience (player versus computer) or a two-player face-to-face game (taking turns at the same monitor).

The basic objective of the game is, of course, to reach the moon first. This is because a significant amount of political prestige points accrue to the successful space exploration team. The key to the game may be found in prestige points that are not only used to score the player's progress in the game, but also to be bartered as international political currency. The propaganda value of successful missions was exceptional in real life and it is reflected in the game, as well. The space race was considered to be a life-or-death issue by the two superpowers, and the scoring system of the game mirrors this aspect of history.

According to the design team, there are fifteen different approaches to take in attempting to be the first nation to reach the moon. Although initially the historical track may seem to be the most effective approach, it is by no means the certain key to victory. This is because the game features enough random events modified by factors such as astronaut skills and the amount of research and testing prior to each mission that there is a one in 10^{84} chance of having the same game.

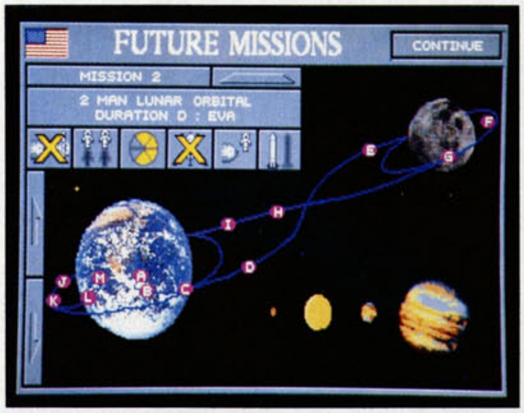
Have Rocket, Will Travel

The initial phase of the game is


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oriented toward choices with regard to rocket research and development. This research continues throughout the game, but new development programs can be added as one progresses in the game. Upon nearing the capability for orbital missions, for example, one will need to place considerable emphasis upon research and development for the capsule itself. The more complex the mission becomes, the more research and development decisions the player will have to make.

The product is expected to include 58 different types of missions. Players will not be required to undertake every mission type in every game, however. The missions will be selected on the basis of the overall track selected and the prestige points to be gained from each successful operation. What is *not* included in the initial 58 missions, but *may be* included in the final design, is a "rescue mission" which would be triggered by another mission going awry. Whatever the final mission selection is determined to be, each successful manned mission or unmanned probe will provide the player with more detail and available in-



formation on which to base his/her next mission (obviously increasing the chance of success in subsequent missions).

Once the player reaches the manned mission stage, it is not simply necessary to declare the object of the mission, but one must assign the crew on the basis of desired skills. Astronaut skills will include such abilities as: command pilot, LEM pilot, docking/navigation skill, endurance and EVA expertise.

As play progresses, the player will get intelligence on the rival space program which, in turn, is likely to provide impetus to take more chances (i.e. speed up the planned schedule) or to become more cautious (i.e. enhance the survivability of one's astronauts/cosmonauts). The computer opponent will have to go through the same decision process as the human player, so the concept of a space *race* is continually emphasized during game play.

Opening the Toolkit

Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space may be first of many products which can be built off existing film footage. One can easily imagine a game of presidential politics where the player, as candidate/campaign manager, edits actual commercials to reflect a message/theme/posture and the demographic data within the game adjust accordingly. One could even do Oliver Stone one better by developing an adventure/strategy game around the John F. Kennedy assassination. One player might be trying to stop the assassination while the other might be trying to perpetrate it. Regardless of future directions, the publication of this product foreshadows a new genre of multimedia games. **CGW**

"Tracy, I've got just what you need," cooed Breathless Mahoney.



"The thug you're looking for is holed up on the wharf."

I hit the **ENTER** key and returned to the squad car. Then I slammed the left **CURSOR** all the way down and sped off to Pruneface's hideout. If I was going to crack this caper, I had to make him spill the beans.



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scene of the crime where I was greeted by a hail of bullets. I reached for the **SPACE BAR** to return the fire. Suddenly, I went down.

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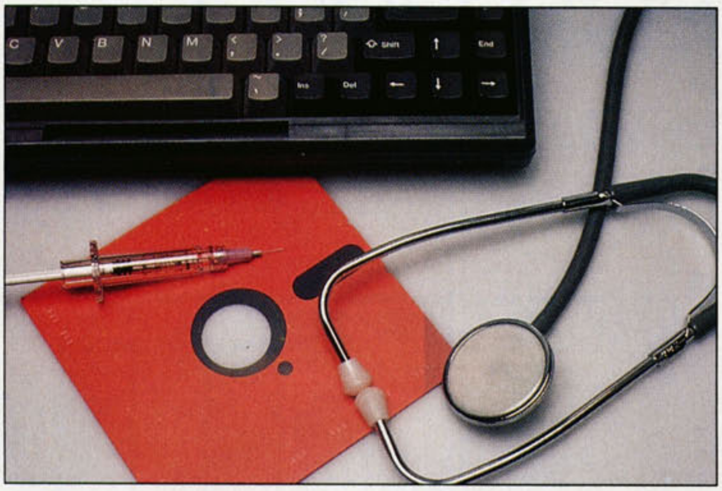


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Circle Reader Service #105

Psst... Wanna Change Your Attributes?



Warning: Silicon Surgery Can Make Your Characters Plastic

by Loyd Case, Jr.

Imagine, if you will, that you're approached by a seedy-looking fellow in a soiled trenchcoat emerging from a dark alley.

"Psst – hey, buddy! Yeah, you. Don't give me that innocent 'who, me?' look."

"The dark circles around your eyes are giving you away, buddy," the man continues. "You've been losing sleep trying to finish Wing Commander Secret Missions 2, *haven't you? Well, I've got the answer for you, on this floppy disk. How would you like a Rapier with 255 shields, 255 armor and six neutron cannons? Don't answer yet, because you can also reduce those pesky Kilrathi cruisers to 1 armor and shield each. Interested?"*

After your rebuke and explanation, the man continues....

"Oh, so it's not Wing Commander? *You're trying to get through the campaign game of* Their Finest Hour. *No problem. Here's another floppy, just for you. Those wingmen of yours are real idiots, aren't they? If only they could get more experience... but, darn it, they just keep getting killed off, don't they?. Ahh, but this disk, my friend, is your salvation. It's got 'BOBED.' You can create instant aces with high scores to fly on your side. They're still not very good, but at least they can keep those pesky enemy fighters off your six for a while...."*

If a Tree Falls in the Forest...

Of course, there really aren't people in seedy coats selling programs on the street to help people "improve" their game, but these "modification" programs actually exist. The two examples in the above little parable, for instance, are genuine. This commentator knows, for he has used them. WCVIEW allows a player to edit the ships in *Wing Commander*, making them as strong or as weak as desired. BOBED allows for the creation of pilots with huge amounts of experience for the game *Their Finest Hour*.

But is it really cheating? To be more precise, is it really cheating in a *moral* sense?

Most people play computer games, at least in part, to *escape* reality. Furthermore, these same computer gamers probably wish to avoid making these *same* very pesky moral decisions. It must be acknowledged, however, that most games have built-in assumptions about what's right and what's wrong anyway, so the question of "cheats" in computer gaming is not presented to muddy up the waters with debate, but to acknowledge a situation and discuss its implications for the computer gaming hobby.

To begin with, hint books have been available for a long time in order to help adventure gamers solve a given game's more difficult puzzles. Hint books started as little flyers handed out at computer shows or messages available on electronic bulletin boards. Later, some enterprising souls made money by compiling books of hints on multiple games. Soon the game manufacturers themselves got into the act, selling hint books, or supplying hints via a 900 area code telephone number which dings the phone bill every time they're called.

Some adventure games have very difficult puzzles, indeed, often created by the warped minds of genius program designers. Thus, using a hint book has become like having a crossword puzzle dictionary to help with solving the *New York Times* crossword puzzle. There is no loss of honor in using a crossword puzzle dictionary or a computer game hint book (unless one is really a purist). So, maybe using program modification "hacks" like WCVIEW and BOBED is not really cheating.

The End of Civilization (As We Know It)

Hint books were not the end of the line, however. Soon, erstwhile entrepreneurs and game enthusiast "hackers" were developing little programs that would allow people to doctor role-playing adventure games. If one keeps getting killed on the ninth level, well, give the hero or heroine the patented Rod of Scorpion Sting or the devastating Blade de Cuisinart, boost the character's constitution to the max and increase his/her hit points from 45 to 150. There, that should do it....

BOBED and WCVIEW are simply public-domain descendants of those original game editors such as *Wizard's Workbench* for the *Wizardry* game system. However, it doesn't even stop there.

Lately, **Galoob Toys** has successfully won their fight to market an accessory for Nintendo called the *Game Genie*. Surprise, surprise... it allows players to edit their Nintendo games, so they can get higher and higher scores.

Why Cheat?

Having talked to a number of gamers, there seem to be only a few factors which drive people to use these programs:

Frustration. After a party has been killed 86 times trying to get past the Temple of the Lost Cause, a player will do almost anything to get past the game's bottleneck. Many players will only "edit" their characters to get past these unusually difficult roadblocks which they perceive as placed in their way by (presumably demented) game designers.

Time. In the game *Their Finest Hour*, for example, it takes many, *many* hours of play to develop a set of good pilots, necessary for success in the game. This is true even if the player has gotten very proficient at the game through hours and hours of play.

Catharsis. There's something strangely cathartic about jacking up one's fighter in *Wing Commander*, creating very weak opponents and blasting away through the most linear, eighteen-mission path without a scratch. On the other hand, it gets boring in a hurry, too.

But Is It *Really* Cheating?

Still, the question remains: is using these "hack" programs really cheating?

The answer is a definite "maybe."

That sounds wishy-washy, but it really isn't. Sometimes a player almost has to cheat because of poor game design. Perhaps not in the overall game, but in one area where the designer may have unintentionally made it overly difficult or a bug might have slipped in which unexpectedly stops the whole show. An analogy can be drawn to clue books: if all one did was read all the clues and rip through the game in two hours, this commentator believes that player would feel oddly cheated.

That's what it finally comes down to: cheating in a computer game is really cheating one's self. Using a hint to get past a section of a game which countless hours have been spent on is probably okay. Most people use hint books (and these other accessory programs) in just that way — as enhancements to the entertainment experience. People play games for entertainment, perhaps for a little education — not to be endlessly frustrated.

In the end, individual gamers will have to strike a balance between the time spent with their entertainments and the other aspects of their lives. Used properly, these kinds of programs and game aids *do* serve to enhance the overall gaming experience. The rub is, where is the line drawn? Is a nine-year-old, given *Game Genie* as a birthday present, really cognizant of the decisions and tradeoffs discussed here? This commentator doubts it.

So the next time a gamer stumbles across a program like WCVIEW, here's hoping he/she thinks about it before using it. Otherwise, a player is likely to be cheating himself (and that player *will* feel cheated... trust me). **CGW**

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From the Cockpit

Situational Awareness While Flying

by Timothy Trimble

"Humm. The ground looks level but the turn and bank instrument says that I'm in a turn. Must be a problem with the instrument." No doubt this has been the thinking of many a pilot just before colliding with the ground. Just as art imitates life, many armchair pilots find themselves in the same type of situation, only with a little more difficulty since the simulated pilot is not affected by the physical forces and stresses that are exerted upon a real pilot. In both cases, however, it is important to have a good grasp of situational awareness.

Total awareness of all the elements of one's situation at any point in time is the crux of situational awareness. As it relates to flying, this means knowing where one is headed, what position the aircraft is in, where the ground is, what the position of the ground is, where the obstacles are and very importantly, where is the enemy and what is the enemy doing?

So, how does this relate to an armchair pilot? Well, in almost every flight/combat simulation product on the market today, the armchair pilot will be able to accomplish his or her goals with more enjoyment and satisfaction if one is "situationally aware." This requires keeping a mental fix on the situation that the plane is in at all times. Fortunately, with the help of some key steps, this is not as hard as it sounds.

● What do the instruments say?
As in the example stated above, the armchair pilot may have to choose whether to trust what can be seen out the window or what the instruments say. The rule is: Believe the instruments! Regardless of what the view out the window is, rely on what the turn and bank instrument or the artificial horizon are indicating for keeping the aircraft in a proper attitude (its position in the air).

● What is the current ground separation?
Again, this is one of the primary causes of armchair pilots creating a crater in the ground. By forgetting to keep an eye on the altimeter while chasing a MiG, one can quickly discover the unpleasant "reality" that there was not quite enough altitude for that inside loop maneuver.

● Where are the obstacles?
As the simulations become more realistic, there are more things to run into. Mountains, buildings and other obstacles have to be kept track of. In *Flight Simulator 4* from **Microsoft**, it is quite possible to fly right into a high-rise antenna structure while looking out the other side of the aircraft at the beautiful Golden Gate Bridge. Even though it is important to rely on the instruments for the situation of the aircraft, it is still important to do a regular scan out the windows for any obstacles.

● Where are the other (especially enemy) aircraft?
This question does require a little more mental effort for proper situational awareness. Products like **Spectrum HoloByte**'s *Falcon* include cockpit instrumentation that displays the position of enemy aircraft in relation to the player's aircraft. Naturally, this helps in maintaining awareness. However, *Red Baron*, from **Dynamix**, requires one to scan outside of the cockpit in order to see where the enemy aircraft are. Even in the high-tech combat simulators this is still very important to do. Remember the scenes in the movie *Top Gun* in which "Goose" kept turning around in the cockpit to get a good look at the enemy? This was to answer several key questions:

Was the enemy climbing or diving?
What direction was the enemy going?
Was the enemy banked for a turn and if so, in which direction?

Being able to visually answer these three questions can help the armchair pilot make a quick decision as to how to out-maneuver the enemy. This is also very applicable to space flight combat products such as **Origin**'s *Wing Commander* and *Wing Commander II*.

● What is the environment?
The environment is the virtual world in which the armchair pilot is flying. It is not the entire flying environment provided by the product but is, rather, the environment that can be affected by the armchair pilot within a certain unit of time. For instance, in *Flight Simulator 4* this could be: Where will the plane be in ten minutes or what will be the plane's relationship to the runway after dropping another thousand feet? For products such as *Falcon*, this would require more precise evaluations, such as: Can the plane be turned to face the enemy by the time the enemy comes out of the S-turn? To answer these type of questions the armchair pilot (just like real pilots) has to have a knack for thinking in three dimensions (3-D) and requires the capacity for a full mental picture of the aircraft, the enemy, the ground, obstacles and how they all relate to each other.

In summary, here are the basic points to evaluate for situational awareness:

1. Rely on the instruments for a proper attitude;
2. Keep an eye on the altitude;
3. Scan for obstacles;
4. Scan and keep a mental picture of where the other aircraft are; and
5. Think in 3-D!

In the life of a real pilot, having situational awareness helps to promote a longer life. For us armchair pilots, it promotes more enjoyment and a chance to "wax the tail" of the enemy a little more often.

Until the next flight plan gets cleared, this is Timothy Trimble, "From the Cockpit." **CGW**

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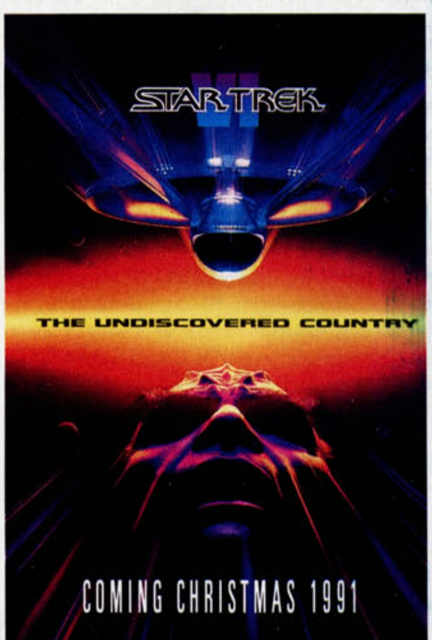
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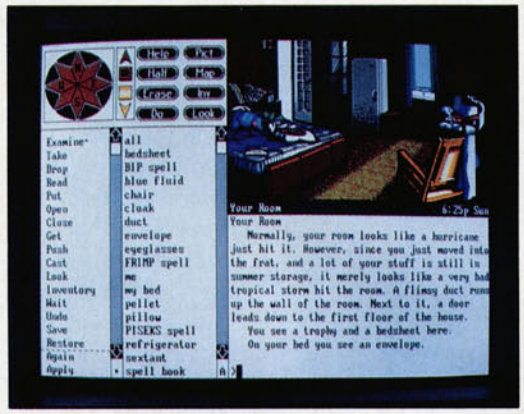


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Scorpion's Tale

Scorpia Goes Back To School In Spellcasting 201: The Sorcerer's Appliance



Wow, it's Christmas time already! This year sure ran by fast, didn't it? Fred's been waiting since last holiday to get his shrunken head garland up; it's his favorite decoration. Just don't look at it too closely (grin). Speaking of holidays, this is the time of year that most schools close for a week or so, letting the students out for home visits. And speaking of students...

He's baaa-aack! That's right, friends, your favorite nerd-o wannabe sorcerer, Ernie Eaglebeak, is here again! Okay, so maybe he isn't quite your favorite, but here he is, and you're just gonna have to live with it.

Last time, Ernie was a lowly frosh. This time, he's a lowly sophomore, having somehow managed to survive long enough to make it to the second year of college. And having managed to survive (and even be something of a momentary hero), he's been pledged to that fine old Sorcerer U. fraternity, Hu Delta Phart.

Can things be looking up for our boy at last? Not hardly. Chris Cowpatty, Pledgemaster for HDP, hates Ernie's guts with a passion that makes a sun's interior seem like the Arctic wastes. Right there, you know Ernie's gonna have some problems.

The scene opens on Sunday evening, with Ernie in the middle of one of those fun simulations: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. He doesn't really have to get through it, by the way; none of the sims add anything to the point score. But, as a matter of pride (and for looking good to the profs), he might want to try his hand at filling the tub and producing a stiff drink for the master sorcerer. All it takes is a little spellcasting and a little slicing at the right moments.

Now, it's time for bigger and better things — like meeting with Professor Tickingclock, the new head of the university. All he wants is for Ernie to discover the secrets of the "Sorcerer's Appliance," sitting behind locked doors in the basement of Ivorytower. Tickingclock sure has a lot of faith in Ernie...but then again, Tickingclock is just this side of senility anyway.

So, all Ernie has to do is survive hell... err, pledge week, learn all about the Appliance and attend a few classes in between (and believe me, Ernie'd better go to those classes). This time around, they aren't just for fun. Important information is learned in them (most of them, anyway), so he can't afford to miss one. Besides, the truancy nymphs will get on his case if he doesn't (heh).

Monday dawns bright and early, with Ernie and other pledges dragged into the basement of HDP. This happens *every* morning and this is where Ernie (and the others) finds out what silly thing has to be done that day.

Monday's task is simple: just climb up and stick a mustache on the statue of Meltingwolf. Easy, right? Well, it would be, except that loveable old Chris oiled the statue last night. Kinda hard to climb, in that condition. There's probably a spell around somewhere that could help with this, if only Ernie could get his hot little hands on it. Might be a good idea to check out the old Appliance. In fact, it's a good idea to check out the Appliance *regularly*. It's very important with regard to getting through the game. Also, each pledge task successfully completed gives Ernie another of the special attachments for the Appliance (as mentioned by Tickingclock during that initial conversation), which he'll need for the next day.

So, about 9:00 PM, Ernie and the pledges (sounds like a pre-Beatles-era dance band, almost) are rounded up and taken down to the HDP basement. This time it's to see if the tasks have actually been accomplished or not. Naturally, Chris is less than thrilled to hear that Ernie got the mustache on the statue. This only drives him to come up with something nastier for the next day.

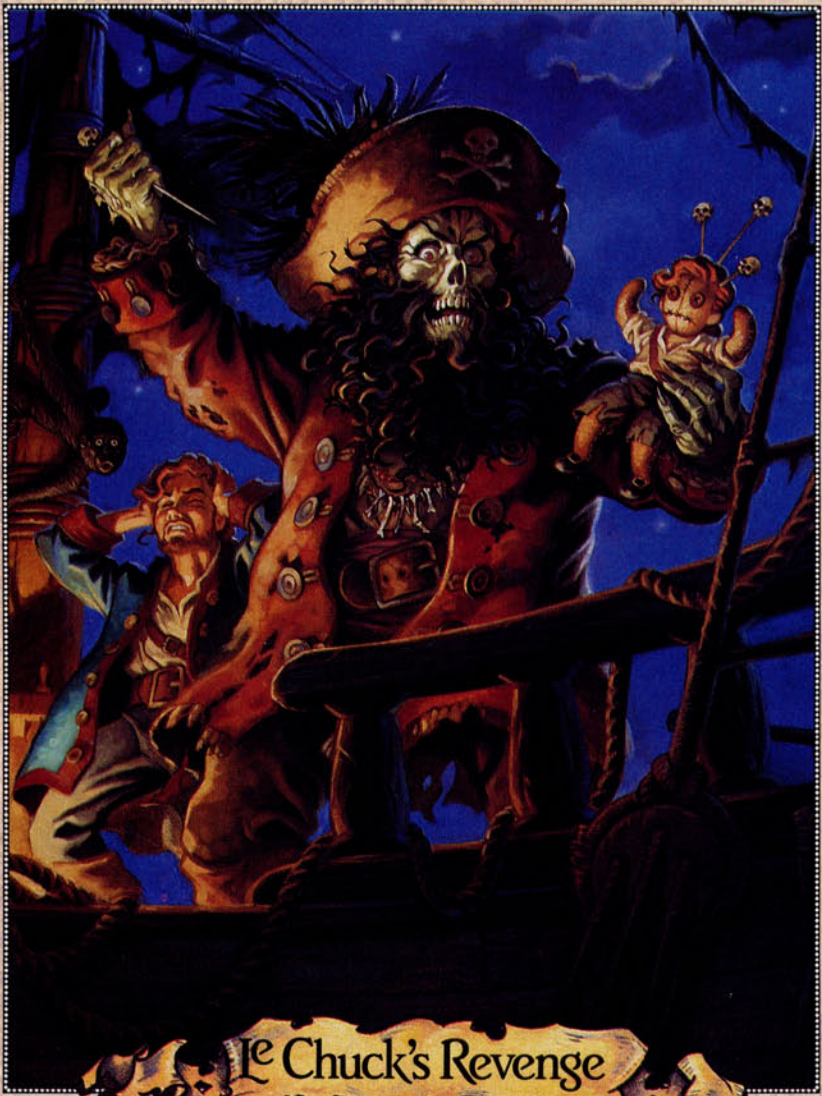
Nastier, in this case, means stealing the mascot of HDP's rival frat, Tappa Kegga Bru. The TKB mascot happens to be an *elevephant*. Looks just like an elephant, only eleven times bigger and much meaner in disposition. Babar (the elevephant) is also being guarded by Lyle Onesaltyteardrop, as a precaution against pledge week shenanigans.

Hint: there is no way Ernie is gonna get Babar out the front door of TKB. Don't even consider it. Then, there's the matter of Babar's pleasant outlook, which alone is enough to reduce Ernie to strawberry jam. And, of course, there's Lyle, who for all his sulks is keeping a sharp eye out for people like Ernie.

Actually, most of this isn't too bad. If Ernie attended class and took good notes (this is a function of the game; you can "read notes" anytime to refresh Ernie's failing memory), it ought to be obvious how to get past Lyle and sweeten Babar's temper.

Hey, that reminds me: has Ernie tried the Veal Surprise casserole from the cafeteria yet? No? Well, I can't blame him for the hesitancy, but sometimes, unpleasant actions are necessary to get on with life and pledge week. Also remember that *any* time Ernie sees a spellbox, he should open it, no matter what people might think of him.

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So, Ernie (guided by your blinding intellect) manages to pull off another pledge stunt, raising Cowpatty's blood pressure to dangerous levels. Determined to make Ernie fail, he comes up with another tough assignment: make all the TKB frat brothers jump fully dressed into the pool during their sacred champagne toast on Wednesday night.

Wednesday brings some surprises of its own: during the night, poor old Prof. Tickingclock kicked the bucket. Tough luck on the old boy, but good luck for Ernie: all classes are cancelled for the rest of the week. (Hey, I bet you were worried about that, weren't you?) Now Ernie has plenty of time to get things done.

So what about that pool party? Well, first Ernie has to get in. No sweat there; it's the same technique he used on Lyle. Then it's just a matter of waiting for the toast (once inside, Ernie is safe from being bothered) and doing his stuff. What? Can't hear ya, speak louder, there's too much music in the background. And speak faster, too. *Oh*, you want to know "what stuff" Ernie has to do? Shucks, I just told you that.

By now Chris is ready to explode, and comes up with the most difficult task yet: spiking the punch at nearby Barmaid U's homecoming party (yeah, Ernie gets to go off campus!). This would be easy, except for the trigger-happy guards that BU always hires to make sure the punch stays non-alcoholic.

For this one, Ernie's gonna need a friend; he can't do it alone. So, once Ernie gets his friend (and gets his friend clothed!), it's off to Barmaid U. A quick look around tells Ernie that an invitation is necessary to attend the reunion. Wonder where he can get one?

While he ponders that, he might want to visit the ladies' shower on the second floor. Pretty steamy, huh? (grin) A little too steamy — seems the shower doesn't work right. What a shame. Too bad there isn't a plumber in the house.

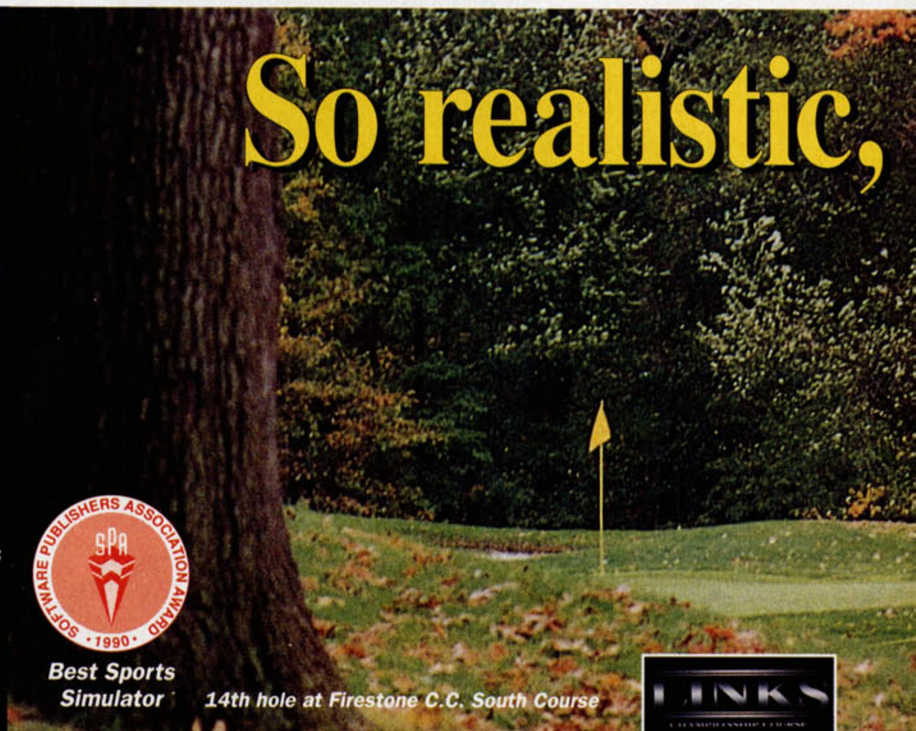
Anyway, the rest of this little escapade ought to be pretty obvious, and before long Ernie will be back at Sorcerer U to bask in the glow of Chris Cowpatty's incandescent visage. Enjoy the moment, Ernie, the tough one is coming up.

Friday's little job involves another off-campus jaunt, this time to nearby Balmoral City. All Ernie has to do is (ahem) moon the queen at her afternoon parade (I just report the facts...blame Meretzky for this stuff!).

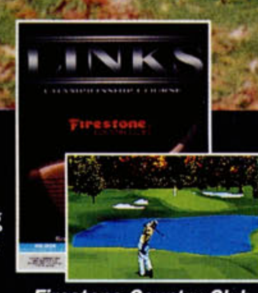
First, Ernie has to get off campus, and this time, Cowpatty doesn't provide a pass. As long as Ernie isn't feeling like himself, that should be no problem. Now he needs a ticket to get into the royal grounds to see the parade. (They don't hand these things out to just anyone, y'know.)

Maybe his old friend Lola Tigerbelly can help, but she doesn't appear to be terribly thrilled to see Ernie again. Say, did Ernie ever do the Enchanted Forest sim? Huh? Huh? I sure hope so, 'cause it has a big clue for this part of the game.

So now Ernie has a ticket and a muddy coin. Into the palace grounds he goes, and hangs out until Queen Libido (yeah, that's her name) passes by and...umm, the guards didn't appreciate seeing a place where the sun don't shine (and I don't mean the brain).







In no time at all, Ernie's in a cell and the royal carpenters are working double-quick to erect a gallows. This does not look good for our hero. He should at least clean up before his final appearance. Oh ick, the water in the sink is cold, and the hot water isn't working. Gee, nothing goes right for Ernie, does it?

Then again....with maybe a little thought (but think fast, time is short!), and a little hands-on experience, and a certain spell, Ernie can get himself taken to far more pleasant quarters and a far more pleasant situation. (Just remember to grab the wand first, Ernie!)

Now it's all done — Ernie has the last attachment for the Appliance, and he's completed all the pledge assignments. What could be left to do? Why, the end game of course.

Be prepared: the minute Ernie puts the wand on the Appliance and opens it, he'll be captured (so to speak) by Chris Cowpatty and a Certain Person (whose name I won't reveal, but whose identity will not surprise anyone who has played this far).

The Certain Person, in the usual vainglorious spiel all villains feel compelled to make at these moments, reveals all. (No, he doesn't take his clothes off; he reveals his dastardly schemes!) Then the CP and Cowpatty leave, with Ernie locked in the room.

A silly mistake on the bad guys' part, of course. Ernie can get out any time he wants to. The question is, where does he want to go, and what's he supposed to do when he gets there?

Well, did Ernie notice what it said on the Appliance when he attached the wand? "Necromancy." We all know that has something to do with (ominous organ music) the dead! Bet that gives Ernie some ideas, and probably bizarre ones at that.

Bizarre, however, isn't the word for what has to be done. Timing is critical here; Ernie needs enough moves to get where he's going, and the only way to do that is to, well, let's say, bowel over the campus, in a manner of speaking.

What comes after that is hard to describe without giving too much away. Maybe it's best to just leave this to your imagination; you should have enough clues by now to figure it all out.

So Ernie makes it into HDP, and will probably survive his sophomore year as well. That means only two more years to go. (Unless he decides to do graduate work....)

Whew! All this mucking about (hehe) sure made the hours go fast. I see by the old invisible clock on the wall, it's that time again. Remember if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu).

On GEnie: Stop by the Games Round-Table (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT).

By U.S. Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the United States): Scorpia, P.O. Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring! CGW



The Circuit Writer

What about this MPC?

By Steve Witzel

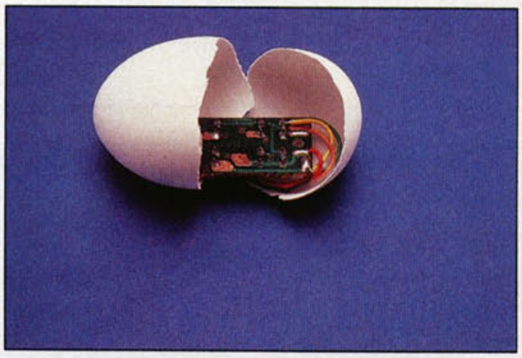
October 8th, 1991 marked a significant event in personal computing history. The Multimedia PC (MPC) launch was the most impressive product launch this writer has ever seen; even the surroundings were impressive. It was held in the largest natural history museum in the world, the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Shown among multi-million dollar displays of precious gems was the future of personal computing.

Keynote addresses started off the afternoon. James Burke, the renowned science historian, PBS writer and host (remember his *Connections* series?), kicked off the event with his prediction that the information age being created by the easy access to information will send *shock waves* throughout civilization. Information that is easy to process, view and manipulate will allow people to learn at their own pace. Data will be assimilated in the way that is easiest for the computer user to process. Threads will be in the data that will enable users to make new connections at their own pace and to direct these new connections toward their personal interests. Burke related this predicted shock wave to the Renaissance. The shock wave that was created during that period changed virtually all institutions. Education and politics were never the same. According to Burke, we are at a similar threshold.

Bill Gates (in a recent *USA Today* article, Bill was reputed to be the second wealthiest American), Chairman of **Microsoft**, spoke about the power of the MPC platform. To demonstrate how easy it is to harness this power, Mr. Gates assigned a group within **Microsoft** the duty of creating an interactive tour of the Museum where the launch meeting was held. In a dazzling display of sound, graphics, full-motion video and interactivity, the task was accomplished. The "tour" was truly impressive, especially since the "tour program" was created without programming in the traditional sense — all that was used was a "tool kit." Now, without having to program, average users will be able to create stunning applications on an MPC.

Following the speeches, attendees were able to see product demos on working MPC hardware. According to the Multimedia Marketing Council, 60 MPC products are either ready to ship or will be shipped before the end of 1991. No other computing platform has been launched with such a broad base of support from software vendors.

The new products are divided into three categories: *working*, *learning* and *playing*. Perhaps most impressive were the wide assortment of development tools available to ordinary computer users. They will be able to create software that can include full-fidelity audio, 256-color graphics and animated or digitized "flicks." The best part is that they can do all this without learning BASIC, C or PASCAL!



Who Is Behind This?

The *Multimedia Marketing Council* is a non-profit subsidiary of the Software Publishers Association. The council is comprised mostly of hardware manufacturers and has two main functions: to administer the MPC trademark and to promote the MPC concept to the public. Most major hardware manufacturers are producing a Multimedia PC or making an upgrade kit so anyone will be able to turn his or her current machine into an MPC. The minimum requirements for an MPC are: a 286 processor, 2MB of RAM, a 40MB hard drive, VGA graphics, an MPC audio card (2-channel digitized 16-bit audio recording and playback, and synthesizer support), a CD-ROM drive that must meet minimum speed requirements and, finally, **Microsoft** *Windows* with *Multimedia* extensions. At least three manufacturers are presently selling an upgrade kit that includes an MPC sound board, CD ROM and *Windows* with the Multimedia extensions. Of course, *most* hardware manufacturers will *not* be supporting a 286 processor-based version of the MPC, as they believe that any MPC machine should have, at least, a 386SX. Some hardware companies *will* produce 286-based MPC machines, however.

What is extremely impressive is that it does not matter which hardware manufacturer provides the basic machine. If it says MPC, it is compatible with any MPC software. The Multimedia *Windows* extensions add several important features to windows. The first, of course, is the capacity for sound that has been so elusive for PC users. Further, *Windows* has a reputation for having slow graphics updates, but the multimedia extensions provide new and faster graphics drivers. Also, the MPC specifications standardize full-motion video playback. Software manufacturers are able to license the MPC trademark for their compatible product.

So, when one purchases or upgrades to an MPC computer, there should be no further worries about whether the software will run on the machine or not. Software with the MPC trademark will run on *any* MPC machine. Gone are the worries of sound board support, memory requirements, graphics standards, etc. If it says, "MPC," it will work. *It's about time!*

After reading all of this, discerning readers will note that an MPC is just a standard PC with sound and CD ROM. This is certainly correct. An MPC is just an incremental step in hardware. However, the interesting aspect is that the software is revolutionary. By having standards and a tremendous storage capability (over 600MB on a disk), the end results are amazing. **CGW**

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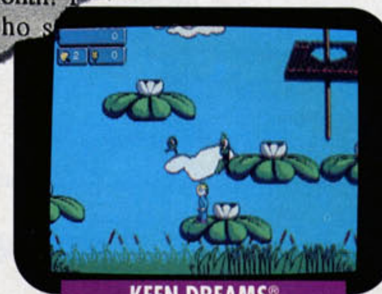
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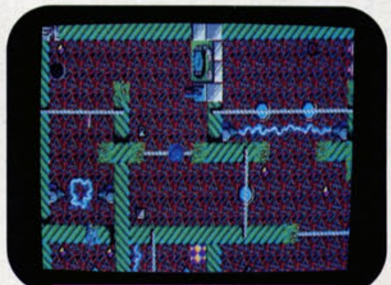
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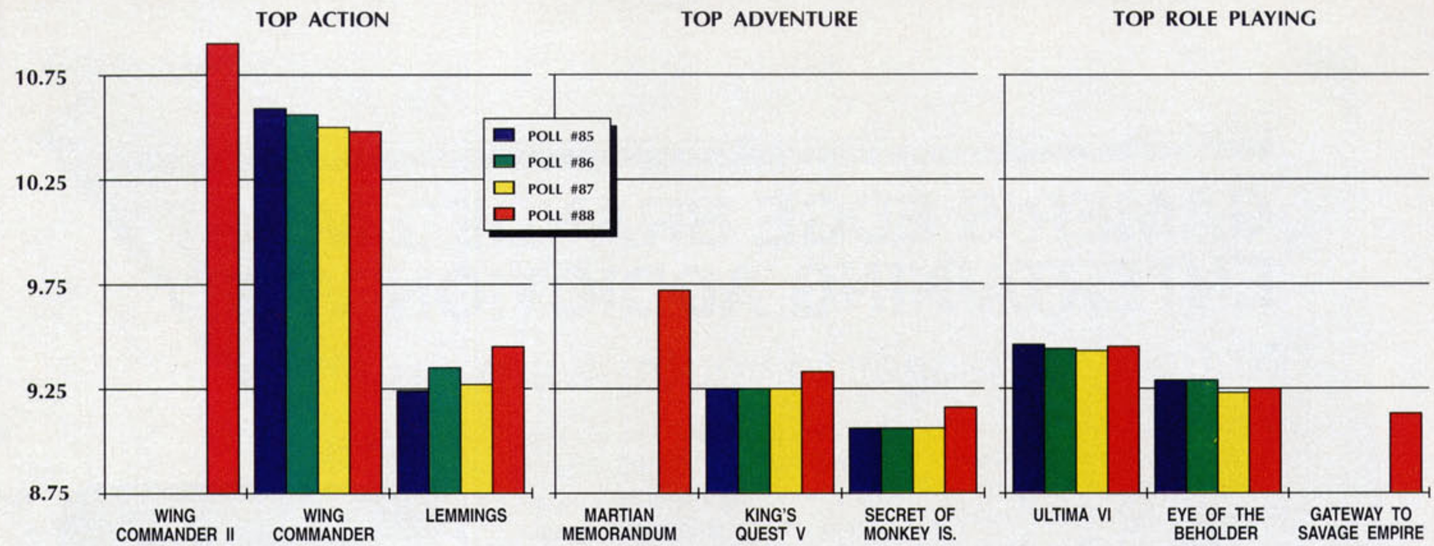
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Action/Arcade (AC):
Computer games that emphasize hand-eye coordination and reflexes.

Adventure (AD):
Games that allow you to take an alter ego through a storyline or series of events.

Role-Playing Adventure (RP):
Adventure games that are based on character development (usually involving attributes).

Top Ten Games

Game Title, Rating
Source, Category

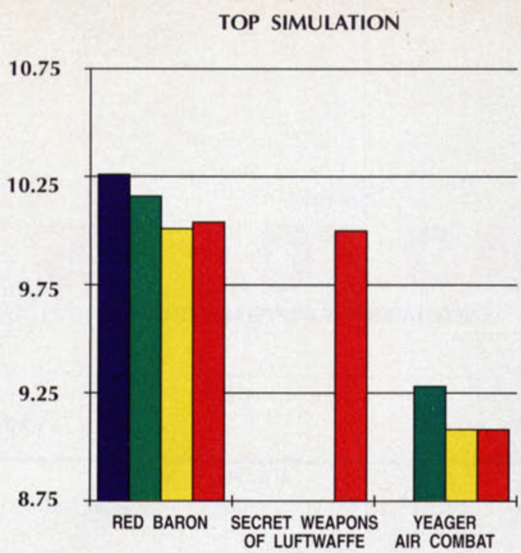
No.	Game Title / Source	Category	Rating
1	**Wing Commander II** — Origin	AC	10.91
2	**Wing Commander** — Origin	AC	10.48
3	**Railroad Tycoon** — Microprose	ST	10.40
4	**The Perfect General** — QQP	WG	10.18
5	**Red Baron** — Dynamix	SI	10.04
6	**Western Front** — SSI	WG	10.00
7	**Secret Wpns ... Luftwaffe** — Lucasfilm	AC,SI	10.00
8	**Martian Memorandum** — Access	AD	9.72
9	**Warlords** — SSG	WG,ST	9.62
10	**Rules of Engagement** — Mindcraft	ST	9.61

CGW Poll #88 can be called the Rookie Poll. Six of the top ten games are new releases. Never in the history of the CGW Poll (going back 8 years) have six new games broken into the Top 10 in one month. Of the 18 games on the category charts, nine are new. CGW readers have looked at the early fall releases and obviously like what they see. This bodes well for the upcoming Christmas season. ➤

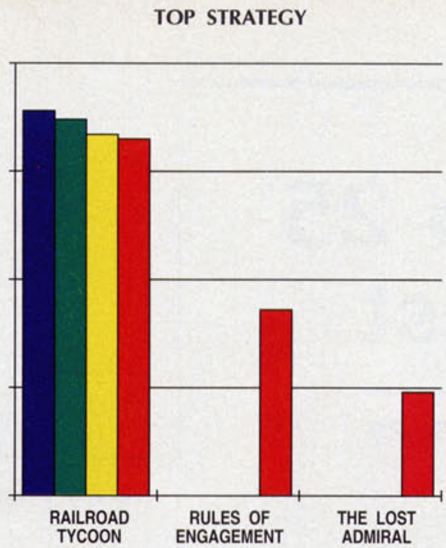
The CGW

No.	Name	Source	Category	Rating
11	Ultima VI	Origin	RP	9.45
	Lemmings	Psygnosis	AC	9.45
13	Harpoon	Three-Sixty	WG	9.39
14	King's Quest V	Sierra	AD	9.33
15	Eye of the Beholder	SSI	RP	9.25
16	The Lost Admiral	QQP	ST	9.23
17	Wings	Cinemaware	AC	9.19
18	The Secret of Monkey Island	Lucasfilm	AD	9.16
19	Second Front	SSI	WG	9.14
20	Gateway to the Savage Frontier	SSI	RP	9.13
21	Mech Warrior	Activision	ST,SI	9.11
22	Command HQ	Microplay	WG,ST	9.10
	Quest for Glory II	Sierra	AD,RP	9.10
24	Chuck Yeager's Air Combat	Electronic Arts	SI	9.08
25	Silent Service II	Microprose	SI	9.07
	Red Storm Rising	Microprose	SI	9.07
27	Battlehawks 1942	Lucasfilm	AC,SI	9.05
28	Bane of the Cosmic Forge	Sir-Tech	RP	9.01
	Ultima V	Origin	RP	9.01
30	Quest for Glory	Sierra	RP	9.00
31	Space Quest III	Sierra	AD	8.97
	Sword of Aragon	SSI	WG,ST	8.97
33	Space Quest IV	Sierra	AD	8.96
	Romance of the 3 Kingdoms	Koei	ST,RP	8.96
	Power Monger	Electronic Arts	ST	8.96
36	Wasteland	Electronic Arts	RP	8.95
37	Overrun	SSI	WG	8.93
38	Falcon	Spectrum Holobyte	SI	8.90
39	Populous	Electronic Arts	ST	8.89
	Martian Dreams	Origin	RP	8.89
41	NFL Challenge	XOR Corporation	ST	8.87
42	Indianapolis 500	Electronic Arts	SI	8.85
43	Elvira	Accolade	RP	8.82
44	Might & Magic II	New World	RP	8.81
45	The Magic Candle	Mindcraft	RP	8.80
	LHX Attack Chopper	Electronic Arts	AC	8.80
	Rise of the Dragon	Dynamix/Sierra	AD	8.80
48	Bard's Tale III	Electronic Arts	RP	8.77
49	Bandit Kings	Koei	ST,RP	8.75
	Heart of China	Dynamix	AD	8.75
51	Covert Action	Microprose	AC,AD	8.73
	Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf	Accolade	ST	8.73
53	Battles of Napoleon	SSI	WG	8.72
	Battlechess	Interplay	ST	8.72
55	Breach 2	Omnitrend	ST,RP	8.71

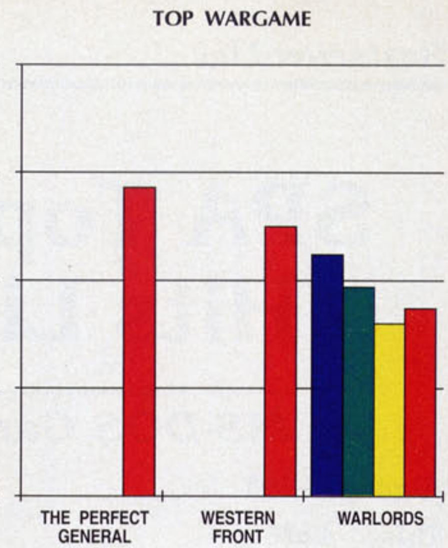
Games are often listed in more than one category. In this case, the first listed category is considered primary. In order



Simulation (SI):
Games based on first-person perspectives of real-world environments.



Strategy (ST):
Games that emphasize strategic planning and problem-solving.



Wargames (WG):
Simulations of historical or futuristic warfare from a command perspective.

Poll

➤ Origin Inc. and Chris Roberts sit on the top of the heap with first and second place ratings for *Wing Commander* and *Wing Commander II*. The *Wing Commander II* rating is easily the highest-rated game in CGW Poll history. **QQP Inc.** makes an impressive entry in the computer entertainment field by placing both its first products in the Top Ten (*The Perfect General* and *The Lost Admiral*).

No.	Name	Source	Category	Rating
	Starflight II	Electronic Arts	RP	8.71
57	Neuromancer	Interplay	AD	8.70
58	F-15 Strike Eagle II	Microprose	SI	8.69
59	Typhoon of Steel	SSI	WG	8.67
	Curse of the Azure Bonds	SSI	RP	8.67
61	Indiana Jones/Graphic Adv.	Lucasfilm	AD	8.65
	Ballistyx	Psygnosis	AC	8.65
63	Action Stations	RAW Entertainment	WG	8.64
64	Wayne Gretzky Hockey	Bethesda	AC,ST	8.62
65	Pool of Radiance	SSI	RP	8.61
66	King's Quest IV	Sierra	AD	8.59
67	Buck Rogers	SSI	RP	8.57
68	Chessmaster 2100	Software Toolworks	ST	8.56
69	Genghis Khan	Koei	ST,RP	8.54
70	Future Wars	Interplay	AD	8.53
71	Panzer Strike	SSI	WG	8.51
	Leisure Suit Larry III	Sierra	AD	8.51
	Sword of the Samurai	Microprose	ST,RP	8.51
	Armada 2525	Interstel	ST	8.51
75	Savage Empire	Origin	RP	8.48
76	Champions of Krynn	SSI	RP	8.45
	Jetfighter II	Velocity	SI	8.45
78	Manhunter 2	Sierra	AD	8.42
79	Nobunaga's Ambition II	Koei	ST,RP	8.40
80	TV Sports Football	Cinemaware	AC,ST	8.39
81	Strike Fleet	Electronic Arts	WG	8.37
82	Fire Brigade	Panther	WG	8.34
83	BattleTech II: Revenge	Infocom	WG,RP	8.33
84	Rocket Ranger	Cinemaware	AC,AD	8.32
85	Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	ST,RP	8.30
86	Drakkhen	Data East	RP	8.27
	688 Attack Sub	Electronic Arts	SI,ST	8.27
88	Lord of the Rings	Interplay	RP	8.26
89	Manhunter	Sierra	AD	8.25
	Ishido	Accolade	ST	8.25
91	Centurion	Electronic Arts	ST	8.24
92	Police Quest	Sierra	AD	8.23
93	Starglider II	Microplay	AC,SI	8.22
94	Jack Nickluas Greatest 18	Accolade	ST	8.21
	Three Stooges	Cinemaware	AC	8.21
96	Leisure Suit Larry II	Sierra	AD	8.20
97	Flight Simulator 4.0	Microsoft	SI	8.18
	Loom	Lucasfilm	AD	8.18
99	Abrams Battle Tank	Electronic Arts	AC,SI	8.16
	Tony LaRussa's Ultimate Baseball	SSI	ST,AC	8.16

Hall of Fame

The Games in CGW's Hall of Fame Have Been Highly Rated by our Readers over Time. They are Worthy of Play by All.

Bard's Tale I
Chessmaster
Dungeon Master
Earl Weaver Baseball
Empire
F19 Stealth Fighter
Gettysburg
Gunship
Kampfgruppe
M-1 Tank Platoon
Mech Brigade
Might & Magic
M.U.L.E.
Pirates
SimCity
Starflight
Their Finest Hour
Ultima III
Ultima IV
War in Russia
Wizardry

to be recognized as the "Top Game" in a given category, a game must be listed as being primarily of that specific type.

SPA Top 25 Hits List

MS-DOS Games

August, 1991

This Month	Last Month	Title and Publisher
1.	*	*AD&D: Gateway to the Savage Frontier* (SSI)
2.	*	*Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* (Lucasfilm Games)
3.	1	*Castles* (Interplay Productions)
4.	6	*King's Quest V* (Sierra On-Line)
5.	2	*Jetfighter II* (Velocity)
6.	5	*Wing Commander I* (Origin)
7.	3	*Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* Electronic Arts
8.	8	*SimCity* (Maxis)
9.	9	*Links* (Access)
10.	*	*Links – Pinehurst* (Access)
11.	4	*Terminator* (Bethesda Softworks)
12.	12	*Flight Simulator* (Microsoft)
13.	14	*Lemmings* (Psygnosis)
14.	7	*Eye of the Beholder* (SSI)
15.	16	*Megatraveller 2* (Paragon)
16.	13	*SimEarth* (Maxis)
17.	11	*Space Quest IV* (Sierra On-Line)
18	*	*Tony LaRussa's Ultimate Baseball* (SSI)
19.	21	*Hoyle's Book of Games II – Solitaire* (Sierra On-Line)
20.	22	*Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf* (Accolade)
21.	15	*Where in America's Past is Carmen Sandiego?* (Broderbund)
22.	17	*Wing Commander Secret Missions Disk* (Origin)
23.	19	*A-10 Tank Killer* (Dynamix)
24.	23	*GamePack 1* (Software Toolworks)
25.	25	*Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego?* (Broderbund)

***Not in July Top 25**

Source: Software Publishers Association

Due to accounting changes within the SPA, no new sales information was available at press time. The above is repeated from last issue. CGW

Advertisement

EAD TOP 25

ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE TITLES

This Mo.	Last Mo.	Type	Title	Publisher
1	2	SIM	★★ No. 1 ★★ Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe™	LucasArts Entertainment™
2	3	RP	AD&D®: Gateway to the Savage Frontier	SSI™
3	1	SIM	Chuck Yeager's Air Combat™	Electronic Arts®
4	NEW	RP	AD&D®: Pools of Darkness	SSI
5	7	SPORTS	Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball™	SSI
6	NEW	RP	AD&D® Collector's Edition	SSI
7	—	SIM	Megafortress: Flight of the Old Dog™	Three-Sixty™
8	NEW	SPORTS	Earl Weaver Baseball™ II	Electronic Arts
9	9	SPORTS	PGA TOUR® Golf	Electronic Arts
10	—	RP	Might & Magic® III	New World Computing™
11	4	RP	AD&D®: Eye of the Beholder	SSI
12	5	EDUCATION	Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing!™	The Software Toolworks®
13	8	RP	AD&D®: Death Knights of Krynn	SSI
14	14	SIM	Battlehawks™/Their Finest Hour™ Bundle	LucasArts Entertainment
15	NEW	SIM	Harpoon™ Challenger Pak	Three-Sixty
16	NEW	SPORTS	4-D Boxing™ with Tru-Motion™	Electronic Arts
17	—	RP	The Immortal™	Electronic Arts
18	10	RP	AD&D®: Secret of the Silver Blades	SSI
19	18	STRATEGY	Rules of Engagement™	Mindcraft™
20	—	RP	Starflight™ 2	Electronic Arts
21	15	FAMILY	Life and Death™	The Software Toolworks
22	6	SIM	Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge™	Electronic Arts
23	11	FAMILY	The Chessmaster 2100™	The Software Toolworks
24	13	GADV	Loom™	LucasArts Entertainment
25	16	SIM	Harpoon™	Three-Sixty

RP = Role-playing SIM = Simulation GADV = Graphic Adventure

- EAD Top 25 is based on the combined sales of all formats.
- Titles on the EAD Top 25 reflect 90 day unit sales (ending 9/30/91) of EAD which distributes the products of 14 leading independent software publishers.



In The Magic Candle, 1989's role-playing game of the year, you saved the lands of Deruvia from the foul archdemon Dreax! But that triumph is past!
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Intertainment to Byte

Perspectives From Intertainment '91

This year's conference on the future of interactive entertainment was significantly different from last year's conference. Last year, the bulk of the conference focused on machines and possibilities that would be here RSN (Real Soon Now). Much of the conversation seemed to be comprised of promises that the attendees had heard all too often for five or six years. This year, the conference focused on *both* available technology and the technology on the horizon.

Last year, CDTV and CD-I were promises. This year, they are *on sale*. Last year, videogames primarily meant 8-bit entertainment. This year, it's a 16-bit world. Last year, virtual reality was too expensive for entertainment applications. This year, amusement park and home entertainment applications are closer to reality. Last year, interactive television meant very limited interaction via special cable connections that took on-line polls or allowed viewers to participate in on-line guessing games. This year, interactive television may be the *future* of personal computing.

The Collision of Film and Silicon

Trip Hawkins, President and CEO of **SMSG, Inc.** (San Mateo Software Group) and Chairman of **Electronic Arts**, turned most interactive metaphors upside-down with his keynote address. Hawkins began with his vision of a "universal box" which would be present in every home. Now, the box would be a computer, a game machine, a telecommunications interface, a photographic/video workstation *and* a cable receiver. In fact, the latter is a key element because it means that when the cable companies go to fiber-optic cables and televisions can provide 1,000 channels rather than the current 60 available on most coaxial cables, people are going to need something more than a remote control in order to access those channels. Indeed, they are going to need a computer that *helps* them find the entertainment they are looking for. So, if they are already going to need a computer to get the benefit of cable, why not put a CD-ROM in the box and allow a gamer to play an interactive movie right there on the television screen? Why not allow a viewer to edit his/her home movies on that same screen and save the results to disk? What if it could be a two-way system where one could answer the doorbell via a camera/cable hook-up?

Naturally, there is a long way to go in reaching this vision of a universal box. For one thing, Hawkins noted that the average consumer is *not* going to be satisfied with images, film and animation that is less than



BattleTech Center

broadcast television quality. Currently, he states that the equivalent of broadcast television (30 frames per second) is the handling of about six million pixels per second. When this is compared to the one million pixels per second of the average 16-bit machine, the result is a standard that is *not* going to be accepted by the masses. In fact, Hawkins suggested that he had yet to see a television/film production person who was satisfied with the MPEG standard of digitized graphics and sound (and MPEG is a stricter standard than JPEG). So, part of the dream is for higher-quality standards.

In talking about this vision of a "universal box," Hawkins noted that cable companies do not have enough money to be able to front the expense on their own. They are not going to be able to allow consumers to purchase the machines by just adding an additional $5.00 per month onto their bills. The machines are going to have to be available as a separate purchase that will have a separate appeal to the consumer. The executive does not believe that consumers will pay $1,000 or so for a machine that offers interactive entertainment — "...something they really don't understand right now...." Instead, he posits a price point of around $500 for a machine that can play audio CDs, get 1,000 channels of television efficiently, play digitized films *and* allow viewers to participate in interactive experiences. Calling this the "Trojan horse" approach to reaching the mass market, Hawkins went on to describe technological, legal and financial problems which will have to be overcome in order to exploit this potential new market.

Television That Responds

Not only was the conference concerned about the "Trojan horse" approach to reaching the masses which was championed by Trip Hawkins, but it was also concerned with using existing technologies in order to transform television from a passive to a more active medium. British television producer Tim Child (**Broadsword Television**) demonstrated the in-studio approach to interactive television; Larry Taynor (**Interactive Network TV**) spoke of home audience involvement and Yves Plouffe (**TVI**) shared about Quebec's experiences with a 125,000-viewer branching TV system.

Broadsword Television's initial hit was a television series called "Knightmare." In "Knightmare," real children played a fantasy role-playing game of interaction and problem-solving in the studio as their fellow team members interacted with live actors and computer-generated graphics (projected via blue screen techniques) onstage. "Knightmare" was followed by a science-fiction role-playing experience where the in-studio contestants (i.e. team members) were dressed in space suits and travelled through a three-dimensional environment as they guided their "robot" through an alien space ship (an artificial environment completely generated in real-time 3-D graphics by a processor powered by an Amiga 68030 chip).

The company's latest experiment is "Cyberzone," a virtual reality environment where contestants travel through a 3-D city and zap obstacles. Although film footage of this show did not look impressive, a new edition of the game is currently under development and should provide more realistic texture overlays for the 3-D shapes, adding to the "suspended disbelief" of contestants and home viewers.

Of course, in-studio interaction does not really advance interactivity much more than the average game show. So, Larry Taynor began his presentation with a parable. "What if," he asked, "one could get the home audience involved in game shows?" He stated that, in 1948, twenty of the top twenty-five network shows (radio network, of course) were interactive game shows. Literally dozens of radio programs called homes and let home players win prizes. Now, with a $300 controller (featuring a full keyboard) and a $15-per-month subscription fee, cable customers in Sacramento, CA can compete with the in-studio contestants. Unfortunately, California contests do not allow chance, consideration or reward, so viewers do not really compete for prizes. They can compete for "score," however, by typing the first two letters of the correct answer prior to the on-screen contestants.

In Canada, the designers of interactive television programs have designed a spe-

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...They'd be full of the kinda well-developed characters you've always wanted to watch...



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...And so much great art and animation you'd stare at the screen till you went blind...



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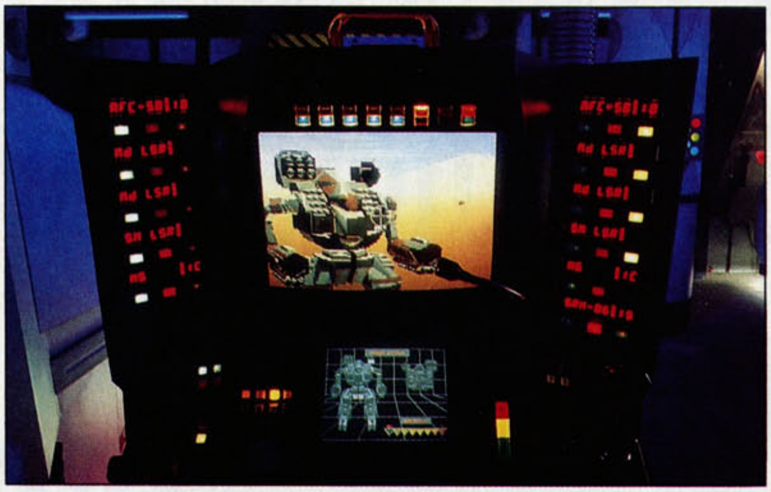
Dynamix

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cial version of *Jeopardy!* in which the in-home viewer is a fourth contestant. Studio contestants are not allowed to answer immediately and the in-home player uses the controller to select answers from an on-screen menu of multiple choice answers. The player's score is tabulated by gaining or losing the amount of money chosen by the studio contestants and play balance comes from the fact that the in-home player gets to compete on *every* question against all three studio contestants.

TVI, the Canadian distributor, is also experimenting with interactive drama. Although it is not set up in such a way that the viewer can *change* the ending, there is a "game," albeit a guessing game, involved in watching these episodes. The producers select about 20 different interactions during the course of an episode. These interactions represent plot progressions. The viewer presses the button each time he/she believes a plot progression has occurred and, at the end of the episode, receives one point for each correct selection.



BattleTech Console

All of the above types of programming seem to offer extremely limited interaction compared with what computer games have offered previously, but alert readers/developers/producers should carefully observe what is being experimented with in the field of interactive television in order to be able to exploit that "universal box" if it should ever actually be available.

Is It Live or Is It Virtual?

Interestingly enough, Steve Glenn of **SimGraphics** (one of the leaders in LBE development of virtual reality entertainments — see the related article on page 24) began his presentation with an illustration drawn from the field of interactive television. Glenn stated that "Consumers want some measure of control over entertainment..." and went on to describe how **Home Video Jukebox** was earning $100 million per year with a simple system in which a viewer calls and requests a video. Even though there is approximately a two-hour delay before the viewer sees that video, subscribers seem willing to pay for the privilege.

Glenn believes that offering more control to viewers will provide more satisfaction and, hence, more profitable opportunities in the future. He sees products advancing from the level of passive ride attractions (like the "Back to the Future" ride at Universal Studios in Florida) through interactive coin-op arcade products and moving forward through *networked* arcade products (like "BattleTech" centers or **Spectrum HoloByte**'s upcoming mall-based flight simulators) and upward through specialized networked products.

He also visualizes a market for VR production in which virtual reality companies would digitize the equivalent of a massive backlot, providing thousands of digitized sets for live performers to use as 3-D backdrops (citing future "Toto" performances). He also perceived an era in which corporations and product lines would use animated mascots rather than the costumed humans of today's era. Further, he observed that their company would eventually be able to place actors in a body suit and record the LEM movements. Such digitized "tapes" would enable designers/producers to become more efficient choreographers and, eventually, to develop a "digital backlot" of animated characters which could be used for several products.

Of course, the uses of LBE virtual reality and production-oriented virtual reality has a place in the future of computer entertainment, but most *CGW* readers want to know when VR will reach the home. The big news is that **Texas Instruments** is currently developing what they call the "next generation" home entertainment center. Their goal is to develop a home VR system that would provide HDTV-quality resolution and a 110-degree viewing angle. Indeed, *CGW* readers with long memories will recall that Chris Gentile (often credited as the developer of the *PowerGlove* for **Mattel**) spoke in general terms (at last year's conference) of consulting on a total virtual reality system for home gamers (see *CGW* #78, p. 36). At that time, the TVR was expected to be tested in late 1992 and launched in 1993. The **TI** product would seem to fit that timeline, although some of the technical specifications have changed (some improved, some less demanding).

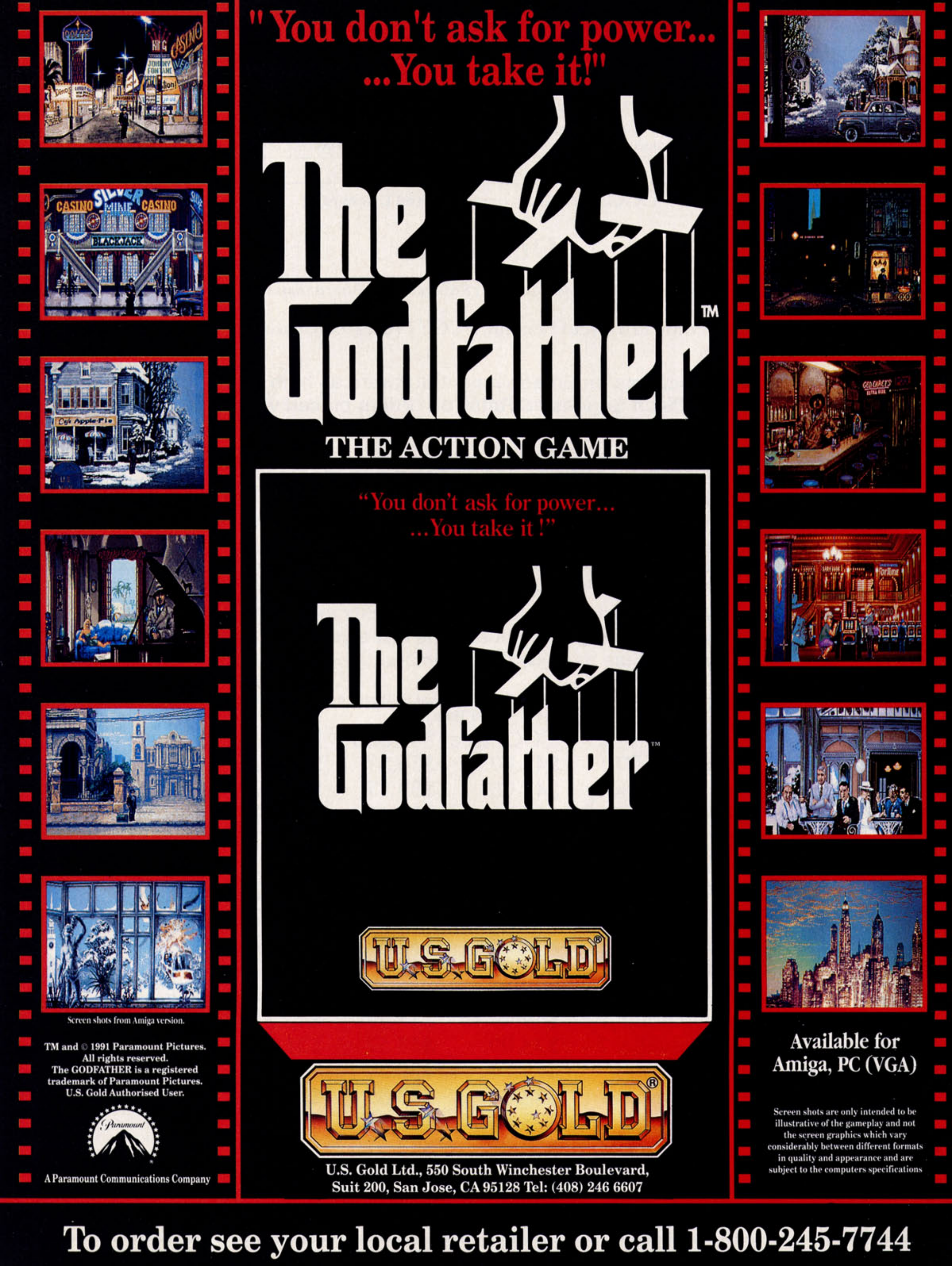
Finally, Jordan Weisman of **FASA** and **Virtual World Entertainments** talked about total immersion into alternate worlds that do *not* include head's-up displays. Weisman's theory is that a convincing virtual environment can be created without the traditional accoutrements of total immersion (helmet, goggles, gloves, pointers, etc.). Interestingly enough, Weisman presented a Michigan State University study of *BattleTech Center* users and the demographics are very close to those of *CGW* readers. 92% of *BTC* users are male, more than 45% are college graduates and more than 40% earn more than $30,000 per year (5% are in the $60,000 plus range). Naturally, this would suggest that designers/producers of VR-based entertainment need to pay attention to the types of computer games which are *already* successful among this target group.

Will There Be Interactive Studios?

Since the keynote address dealt with the relationship between the old Hollywood and the new, it seemed only appropriate that one of the final sessions would deal with the idea of the interactive studio. Although there was much excitement among many of the participants about a partnership between the traditional entertainment industries and the interactive entertainment industries, **Columbia Pictures Television** executive Steve Mendelssohn provided a much-needed reality check. He stated that the studios in Hollywood are taking a go-slow approach to multimedia and underscored the fact that studios tend to be *followers* rather than leaders. He observed that even his own company had not synergized with its parent (**Sony**) in the way many people had believed would occur. Further, he talked about "residual" issues that would have to be resolved when the Writers Guild, Directors Guild, SAG and AFTRA began to observe passive media (film, television, recorded work) being transformed into active media.

Then, he suggested that there was room for cross-pollination between passive media and interactive media in the present environment. He believes that the *writing pool* is the natural place for synergy to start. Writers are always looking for a new form to write in and new frontiers to address. He did not seem to be aware of the fact that mainstream writers and composers were already filling the talent pools of entertainment software companies (particularly at **Sierra/Dynamix** where the trend has been visible for years).

Although other speakers on the same panel laid some ground rules for participating in a synergistic partnership between passive and interactive media, Mendelssohn's remarks provided a *caveat* for the entertainment software industry. That is, until some legal considerations have been ironed out, it is *still* cheaper to produce new material for interactive properties than to license linear properties for further development. It falls to the creative iconoclasts (the independents rather than the media giants) who seem to surface in the revolutions that take place in *any* industry (particularly the creative industries) to carve out the new frontiers of **Intertainment**. **CGW**


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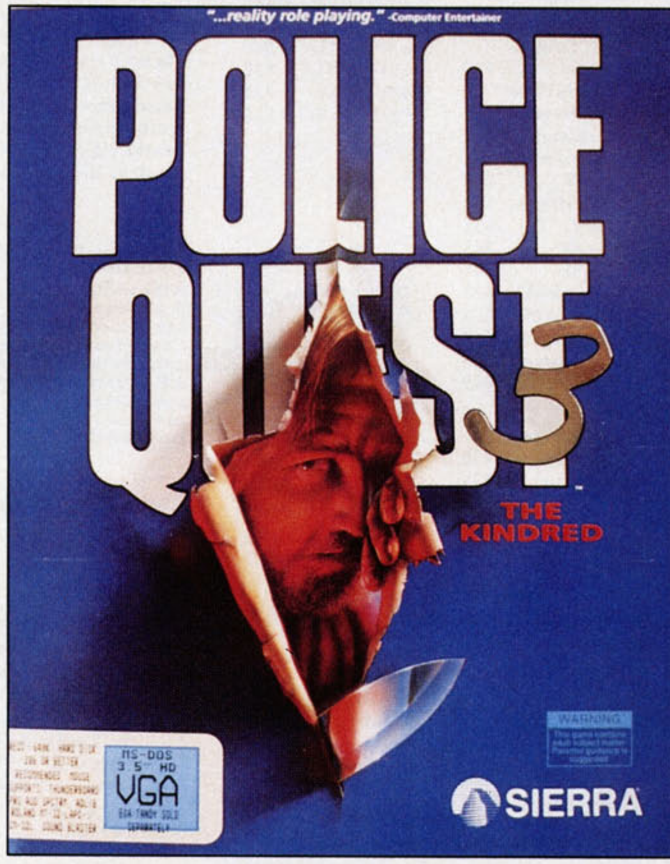
Kindred Arrests

Police Quest 3: The Kindred

by J. D. Lambright

TITLE:	Police Quest 3
SYSTEM:	IBM
PROTECTION:	Document Look Up
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Jim Walls
PUBLISHER:	Sierra Coarsegold,





One of the great strengths of the original *Police Quest* was that the encounters were "fictionalized" versions of actual arrests and situations, either experienced by designer Jim Walls himself (a retired law enforcement officer) or one of his colleagues, that required correct police procedures to resolve. *Police Quest 3: The Kindred* (*PQ3*) continues the tradition of excellence. In spite of the controversial "parser-less" interface (which some veteran adventure gamers believe has a tendency to make the games less complex), the latest installment in the career of Detective Sonny Bonds *still* requires authentic police procedures to solve the case. *[Ed: In fact, the police procedural aspects of the series have been so well-received by actual law enforcement agencies and personnel that Jim Walls' development company,* **Jim Walls Games**, *is working on a professional computerized training program using* **Sierra**'s *toolkit.]*

The puzzles in *PQ3* are tougher than those in earlier *Police Quest* adventures. Be careful in making decisions early on as they significantly affect results further on in the game. Also, unlike some of the other games with the parserless interface, such as *Leisure Suit Larry 5*, Sonny Bonds *can* die.

Of course, puzzles are not the only features to be enhanced in *PQ3*. The graphic artists used rotoscoping (drawing over filmed footage of live actors) to improve both the animated movements of the characters and to provide a more cinematic perspective to screen layouts and blocking (character movement on-screen). Sometimes, the scenes are so real that reaching out and touching the monitor would almost cause one to expect to see blood on one's hands (and *PQ3* does have blood!).

The musical soundtrack, composed for maximum adrenalin effect by Jan Hammer of *Miami Vice* fame, effectively uses most of the available sound cards in presenting an audio cue as to the importance of certain scenes, as well as enlivening transition times. Beyond the music, the sound effects do a good job of emulating everything from typewriter clacking to the banshee screams of screeching tires.

Roll Call

Warning: Portions of the next few sections of this article offer specific hints for completing the game. Readers who do not desire hints should skip to the section entitled "Debriefing."

In *PQ3*, the player takes on the role of a modern detective. To succeed, one will practically have to be a master of deductive reasoning, an artist (using the game's computer-assisted composite photo technique), a social worker and a computer specialist. Following the manual's "First Day Briefing (Walk-Thru)" will get rookies (first-time *PQ* officers) off to a fast start.

The game begins like any police officer's day, with a briefing. As usual, parts of the briefing are thinly disguised versions of the real thing. This is immediately followed by a one-on-one conference with a fellow officer to determine strategy. Then, it is time to equip oneself for the investigation by heading to the locker room and adding useful articles to Sonny's inventory. Players better make sure that Sonny ends up in the "Men's Locker Room" or they are liable to meet an unhappy "fellow" officer that resembles a female version of Mike Tyson.

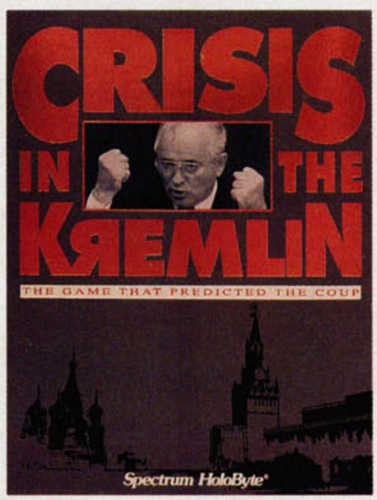
Driving Sonny Crazy

Driving a police cruiser to Aspen Falls is next on Sonny's agenda. Navigation is accomplished via the map of Lytton provided in the manual. Driving the car demonstrates some of the versatility of the new **Sierra** adventure game toolkit. The player places the cursor in front of the squad car and presses the left



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mouse button to increase speed and the right one for braking. The car can be turned by placing the cursor at the intersection (and in the direction) in which the turn is to be made. Since these controls are considerably different than those to which players are accustomed, it make take a while before they are mastered. In fact, one is very likely to spin out quite a few times when turning corners too fast. If players are alert for the signs which indicate upcoming intersections or are paying attention to the built-in "locater beacon," they should get this part of the game mastered fairly quickly.

Note that Aspen Falls does not have a turnout. So, one has to stop the car, turn off the ignition and exit the vehicle at the appropriate location. There, one must talk to the bystanders, take notes and proceed according to police procedures. For those not properly prepared, a watery grave awaits. Sometimes the best thing to do is "to do unto others as they do unto you." Remember, a suspect should always be handcuffed and searched before anything else is done. In addition, one must always follow procedures when booking a suspect, since mistakes cost lives.

Homicide

At this point in the game, Walls opts to deviate from realistic police procedures. Normally, when a member of an officer's immediate family is a victim of a crime, said officer is not allowed to work on the case. The chance of the officer's emotions causing him/her to make a serious mistake is too great. In this case, Marie (Sonny's wife) has been attacked and stabbed. Of course, Sonny's involvement in the case is simply a page out of the average detective movie where the hero violates a direct order just to "make sure" the crime is solved. In the game, for example, Sonny knows that the scene of the crime will have been carefully scrutinized by the experts, but there is a tremendous temptation just to make sure. One must be certain to use evidence gathering techniques properly and to take down important information. Also, just as one would expect in a mystery screenplay, it sometimes takes a good night's sleep in order for the subconscious to sort matters out.



One thing is certain. Walls does an excellent job of keeping the player motivated in *PQ3*. Sonny will definitely want to visit Marie and the sight of his helpless wife is enough to bring tears to the hardened crime fighter's eyes. As if Marie's situation were not bad enough, the hospital environment is tremendously depressing. Maybe the player could find something to brighten things up? It might even help bring her out of the coma. After all, that happens in other scripts. After that, well, maybe work will help to pass the time.

So, the plot evolves. Sonny *is* transferred to Homicide and he gets a new partner. One must get back to proper procedure to advance further, though. Studying cases of similar homicides in order to look for a "pattern," interrogating a witness and creating a composite photo should be helpful. Unfortunately, there is something about Sonny's new partner that just seems "funny." Maybe watching her might not be such a bad idea. In fact, there is something "key" about watching her.

In fact, after a routine court appearance, Sonny may get his chance to "key" in on his partner. Almost immediately, the two detectives get a radio call indicating that a murder has been committed in an alley near 300 Rose. Examining the body (a real "nail biting" task) should give the detective some idea of the "pattern." This should be followed by a trip to return evidence to the crime lab.

Sonny will eventually get enough evidence to end up at a local pool hall. Once there, it certainly would not be a bad idea to place a tracker on that vehicle Sonny has been trying to locate. Then, one can enter the pool hall and, essentially, flush the suspect out.

It's a Dirty Job

After all the excitement, Sonny might notice that someone has "taken a powder" (not in the usual sense). It might not be a bad idea to search that person's desk. The locker combination looks helpful. After that, Sonny might need to get the janitor away from the door. Well, what are janitors for? After obtaining his services, it is no problem to exit and enter "forbidden territory" long enough to examine the contents of the locker. Remember, an officer had better inform his/her captain about such things.

After visiting both the coroner and Marie, the plot quickens with a radio call from dispatch. Sonny will need to proceed to the appropriate address. He should not, however, enter the dwelling until *after* the fire marshall says it is all clear. Then, he should take careful note of the contents of the dwelling, particularly the photographs. The altar room may offer very fertile ground for gathering additional evidence.

Eventually, this will lead the detective to visit the army recruiter at the mall and read the file on the suspect. This, in turn, will necessitate a visit with the criminal psychologist back at the station and onward, to the endgame.

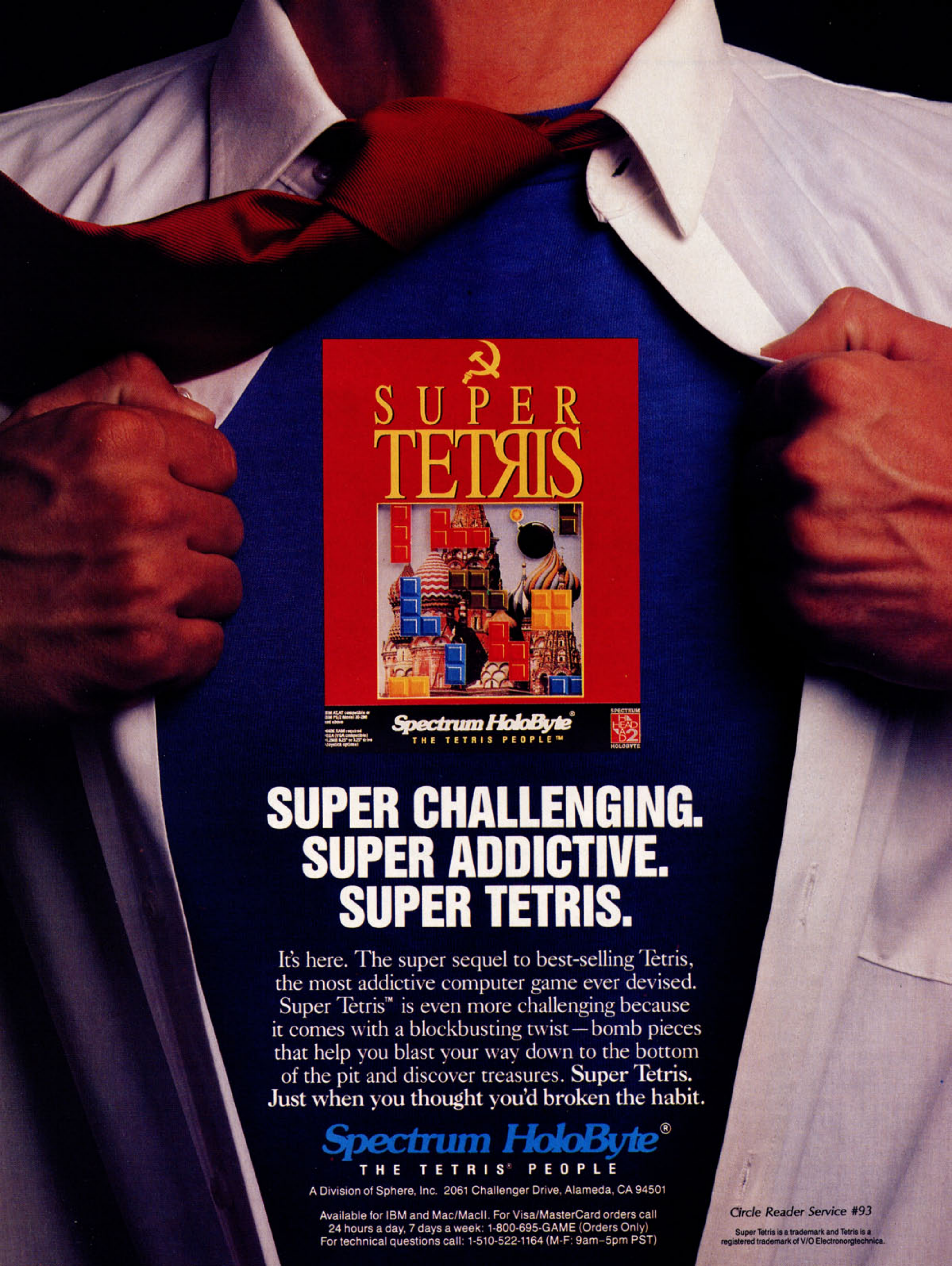
Book 'Em Dan-o!

If the investigation is proceeding well, Sonny should be able to knock on the door of the crack house and attempt to speak to its occupants. As usual, the straight-ahead approach does not get him very far, so he has to appear before a judge and obtain a search warrant. If successful, he should be able to use the warrant to make a search and garner enough evidence. He should return to the station and book the evidence. Then, after returning to the courthouse and appearing before the judge, once again, one can finally make the bust. Alert players will remember, however, the immortal words of Yogi Berra ("It ain't over till it's over!") and make sure that the *real* brains behind the operation is brought to justice, even if it is *cinematic* justice!

Debriefing

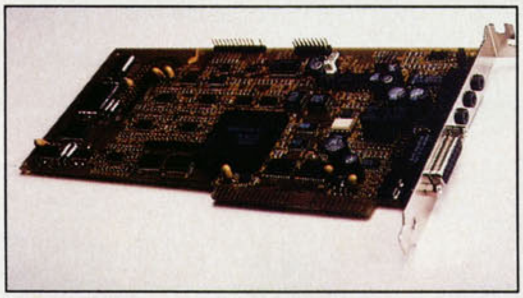
Police Quest 3: The Kindred is the best of the series to date. The parserless interface enhances playability so much that even those who did not care for earlier **Sierra** releases may want to try the new generation. *PQ3* offers more replayability than one would suspect, because every time one tries to do something differently, something new will pop up that the player did not see during the first experience.

Whether one is looking for a good "cops 'n' robbers" story, a police procedural mystery or a challenging adventure game, *Police Quest 3: The Kindred* fits the description. CGW


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The Texture of Technology

News for Computer Gamers from Comdex



Ad Lib Gold Card

Although pen-based computers seemed to be the star attractions at this year's fall Comdex in Las Vegas, certain general trends continued to be much in evidence. To be specific, the miniaturization of the laptop into notebooks and palmtops, as well as the emergence of multimedia platforms, seemed to be gaining momentum.

The Search for the Gamer's Notebook

Naturally, a notebook computer with even gray-scaled VGA resolution would be a boon for the business and professional traveller who carries a computer with him/her and may want to play a computer game on a plane or in a hotel room. In general, the screen refresh rates (for LCD screens) have not been efficient enough to play games that require a fast frame rate and tend to leave residual "smudges" on the screen whenever objects move across the "monitor" or the cursor moves over the playing area.

In playing *Tetris*, for instance, one might have a trail flowing behind a block that is more than two times the length of the block itself. In a graphic adventure, one might inadvertently add new lines to the on-screen images by simply moving the cursor. Of course, many of the early laptops did not even offer a full 640 x 480 display screen.

One of the notebooks shown at Comdex that looked like it might offer an answer for gamers on the go was the **Avi** *ANB-386SX-20* notebook. Weighing in at seven pounds and featuring a built-in VGA port (to hook up to an external VGA monitor), the notebook offers: a 640 x 480 VGA (with 64 gray levels), two RS-232 serial ports, built-in DC converter, an FDD port (for external disk drive) and DR DOS.

At a suggested retail price of $3,599 (and estimated street price of $2,489), the ANB-386SX-20 is the first laptop that will undergo future testing for a *CGW Lab* report (where several different types of "state-of-the-art" games will be tested in both LCD and CRT modes, as well as AC- and DC-powered). Technical representatives at the company say that there is minimal blur when running *Flight Simulator 4* in LCD mode and that *Tetris* leaves a trail equal to approximately "one-quarter" of one of the blocks before the screen refreshes. Naturally, the machine functions like any other 386SX computer when connected to a standard VGA monitor. *CGW* will comment on other "gameable" notebook computers as more information becomes available.

Moving Toward Multimedia

All of the sound card manufacturers which contributed to the earlier "sound revolution" on PC compatibles are getting into multimedia. As noted in *CGW* #88 (p. 14), the new **AdLib** *Gold Card* (pictured) will not only use the new **Yamaha** stereo chip that is almost synonymous with multimedia sound, but will feature three daughterboards that will fit onto the *Gold Card* itself to provide additional features. One add-on serves as a SCSI port (to add a CD-ROM drive); another allows the user to create a "Surroundsound" mode and the other turns the *Gold Card* into an answering machine.

Other manufacturers are preparing multimedia upgrades, as well. **Creative Labs**'s *Sound Blaster Pro* provides 8-bit stereo and has a built-in CD-ROM drive interface, joystick/MIDI port and MIDI time-stamp. **Covox** also previewed a new board compatible with the **Yamaha** gold standard.

Perhaps, the most exciting news from **Covox** was that they have developed a software program called *Overlord* that enables the **Covox** line of boards to emulate any of the current boards. (One must have MIDI capability in order to emulate the **Roland**.) Readers who have had compatibility problems between the *Sound Master II* and the drivers which support *Sound Blaster* and *AdLib* are urged to download *Overlord* free from the **Covox** bulletin board: (503) 342-4135.

On "Making" Multimedia

One of the most impressive presentations at the show was an authoring station for multimedia, although the hardware is developed for professional developers as opposed to being available to the general public or amateur developer ($19,700). What is exceptionally impressive about this system is that it allows a software developer to capture video (from laser disc, broadcast or tape), encode the images and audio (approximately 16K per second) and play the footage back (as called for in a new application) at thirty frames per second with 800-line (NTSC) resolution.

The authoring station allows its users to capture, edit frame by frame and then, create what the company calls *SoftVideo* (playback data) in either the JPEG or MPEG standard. The company also uses the ISO 9660 standard used by the MPC, IBM, Apple, Sun and NeXT machines.

Claiming the fastest CD-ROM data-read time in existence for full-motion video, the **TMM** authoring station demonstrates that the technology for true multimedia products is just around the corner. Frank-

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Battles of Napoleon (SSI)	34
Brigade Commander (Amiga) (TTR)	30
Carriers at War (SSG)	39
Command HQ (Microplay) (T)	39
Conflict: Middle East (SSI)	39
Harpoon (360) (T)	39
Meditteranean Set (T)	21
Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf (T)	23
Scenario Editor (T)	28
L'Empereur (Koei)	39
Liberty or Death (Koei)	39
Lost Admiral (QQP)	39
MacArthur's War (SSG)	27
No Greater Glory (SSI)	43
Patton Strikes Back (Broderbund)	39
Perfect General (QQP)	39
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Third Reich (Avalon Hill)	24
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A-10 Tank Killer (Dynamix) (T)	39
Avenger A-10 (Spectrum)	44
F-15 II (Microprose) (T)	36
Desert Storm disk	21
F-117A Nighthawk (Microprose) (T)	43
Falcon 3.0 (Spectrum)	45
Gunship 2000 (Microprose) (T)	44
MegaFortress (360)	39
Mission disk #2	24
Red Baron (Dynamix) (T)	39
Secret Wpns of Luftwaffe (Lucas) (T)	44
Expansion disk #1 or #2 (T)	21
Strike Commander (Origin)	47
Wing Commander II (Origin)	47
WCII Mission disk	28
Yeager's Air Combat (EA)	39

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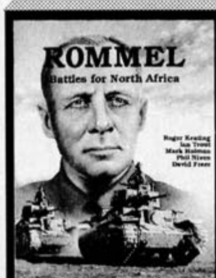
Crusaders of Dark Savant (SirTech)	43
Bane of Cosmic Forge (SirTech)	39
Bard's Construction (Interplay)	36
Conan (Virgin) (T)	34
Conspiracy (Accolade)	36
Dusk of the Gods (Interstel) (T)	39
Elvira II (Accolade)	44
Eye of the Beholder II (SSI)	39
Gateway Savage Frontier (SSI) (T)	34
Immortal (EA)	28
Indy Jones: Fate of Atlantis (Lucas)	39
King's Quest V-VGA (Sierra)	43
Magic Candle II (Mindcraft) (T)	39
Might & Magic III (NewWorld) (T)	39
Planet's Edge (NewWorld)	39
Police Quest III (Sierra)	39
Pools of Darkness (SSI) (T)	39
Secret Monkey Island II (Lucas)	39
Shadow Sorcerer (SSI) (T)	34
Star Trek (Interplay)	39
Twilight 2000 (Paragon)	39
Two Towers (Interplay)	39
Ultima VII (Origin)	47
Uncharted Waters (Koei)	42

SPORTS

All Amer College Football (Interplay)	39
Ditka Ultimate Football (Accolade)	36
LaRussa Baseball (SSI)	34
Links (Access)	39
Madden Football II (EA)	34
Nicklaus Unlimited Golf (Accolade) (T)	39
NFL ProLeague Football (Interplay)	48
Playmaker Football (Broderbund) (T)	34
Weaver Baseball II (EA)	34
1990 Players/Managers	17
Commissioner disk	21

STRATEGY

Armada 2525 (Interstel)	34
Bandit Kings of China (Koei)	39
Castles (Interplay) (T)	39
Scenario disk	21
Civilization (Microprose)	39
Genghis Khan (Koei)	39
Medieval Lord (SSI) (T)	39
Nobunaga 2 (Koei)	39
Overlord (Virgin) (T)	34
Populous (EA) (T)	34
Powermonger (EA)	39
RR Tycoon (Microprose) (T)	39
Romance 3 Kingdoms 2 (Koei)	42
Rules of Engagement (Mindcraft) (T)	39
Siege (EA)	39
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Graphics Future (T)	23
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ly, *CGW*'s editor was skeptical until they allowed him to give the director's "cut and print" order and then watch the machine encode the data and play back from the computer itself. It was an amazing demonstration with tremendous potential.

Is There Really a Multimedia Market?

"Multimedia" is, essentially, the use of passive media in the form of digitized images and sound (in the present sense, usually requiring optical storage and enhanced audio-visual capacity) in an interactive software program. It is an extremely popular "buzzword" in computing circles because of its tremendous consumer potential (see the reports on the MPC launch and Intertainment '91 in this issue). **The Interface Group**, sponsors of Comdex, presented a "white paper" at the show, which estimated that educational materials (including *both* audio-visual products and computer software) amounted to approximately $700 million per year and professional/business-oriented audio-visual materials amount to approximately $2 billion per year. The positively amazing estimate, however, was that the consumer market for interactive computer-based multimedia could easily amount to $42.5 billion in revenue per year.



TMM multimedia authoring station (plastic cup not included)

In terms of multimedia entertainment at Comdex, **Sierra** was displaying CD-ROM versions of *King's Quest V* and *Jones in the Fast Lane*, as well as their *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* multimedia title. **Access** demonstrated the multimedia allure of their *Links for Windows*; **ICOM** unveiled a new CD-ROM version of *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* that ran considerably smoother than the **NEC** *TurboGrafx 16* version; **Broderbund** mesmerized parents of small children with their first "Living Book," *Just Grandma and Me* (a multi-lingual animated story which children can "explore" via the mouse or simply enjoy as the computer reads the story aloud to them) and **Interplay** showcased the sound capabilities of *Battlechess CD-ROM*.

Prognosis for Progress?

If the exhibitions at this Fall's Comdex were any indication, multimedia should begin to be a significant minority portion of the entertainment software market by the end of 1992 and, possibly, hold a slight majority of the market in 1993. Now that the technological issues seem to be coming together with some near-term solutions, the challenge is to capture the imagination of consumers with challenging game designs and fascinating products. There are still plenty of questions about the future of interactive entertainment, but there seem to be a semblance of answers, as well. **CGW**

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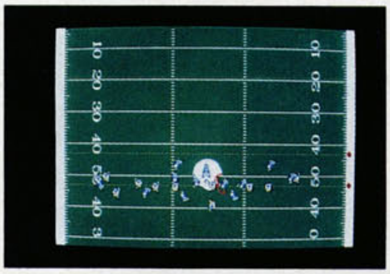
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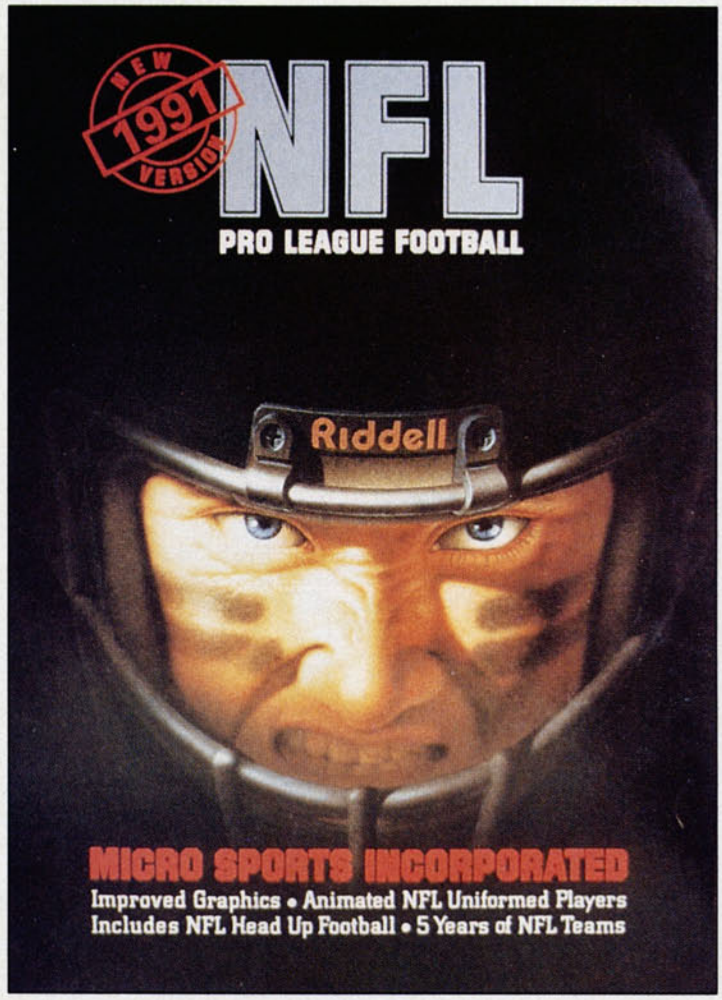
TITLE:	NFL Pro League Football
SYSTEM:	IBM
# OF PLAYERS:	1-2 (or more with league play)
PRICE:	$79.95
PROTECTION:	None
DESIGNER:	David Holt
PUBLISHER:	Micro Sports Inc. Hixson, TN

Football for the Pros

Micro Sports' NFL Pro League Football

by Win Rogers





NFL Pro League Football is not an arcade game that gives the feeling of unleashing a long pass or slogging it out on the defensive line. It does not blow players away with glitzy graphics or sound. It is, however, *unmatched* as a thinking fan's football simulation. It is football handled like a game of chess with live pieces. It offers an intelligent choice of playing modes and an incredible depth of statistical detail. This is not a game for novices, but for serious fans who know their football and want a game that takes full advantage of that knowledge. Further, it is well-designed as a platform for computerized league play.

The "new 1991 version" now in the stores, the subject of the current review, is an upgrade of a game available previously. Owners of the earlier version can upgrade at a reduced price. Gamers will want to know what is in the box, since it carries a much higher price tag than the competition. The game comes with a glossy player's manual, two glossy player reference cards and 3.5" and 5.25" disks containing compressed files that are expanded during installation. It requires a hard disk, EGA or VGA graphics and 640K of RAM.

However, it is the wealth of real player statistics that has driven up the cost, since the developer paid licensing costs to the NFL and to the Players' Association. The game comes with five years (1986-90) of NFL rosters for all the pro teams, an amazing 140 rosters in all. Additional player disks covering earlier decades are said to be available. The game allows head-to-head play over modem and downloading of current team statistics from the *USA Today Sports Center* (not tested by this reviewer). It does not support joystick or mouse.

The documentation, especially the reference cards, which describe available offensive and defensive plays, is clear and helpful, but assumes a solid understanding of football strategy. There is a great choice of offensive and defensive plays and strategies. The game also contains the most excellent printing and record-keeping utilities yet seen in a computerized football simulation.

The opening menu gives the choice of two playing modes and various statistical utilities. Players can choose to play *NFL Head-Up Football* or *NFL Pro League Football*. It is also possible to access the General Manager, League Leaders and Stats Keeper modules from this menu.

Going Head to Head

NFL Head-Up Football is a one-play-at-a-time game simulation. When plays are being run, there is a full-screen shot of the play as if from a low-flying blimp hovering directly above the quarterback's head. The animation is rather rudimentary, and the sense of action is limited by the fact that the ball is always snapped from the same spot on the screen, so that the hash marks, not the players, move between plays. When the ball is not in play, the screen charts the position of the ball on the field, gives a text summary of the most recent play and shows a shot of the referee who may be signalling a call. The play-by-play summary can be routed to a printer for a full record of the game.

Several choices can be made before the game begins. Two players can take opposing sides, or one player can take on the computer. The month, the weather, the speed of the simulation and other variables can be adjusted. The simulation knows which teams play their games in domed stadiums out of the weather. Players enter a two-digit code to select a play from a vast choice of offensive and defensive plays shown on sturdy laminated sheets.

The large choice of plays is intimidating at first, but the codes are logically designed and can be studied and mastered through repetition. After the game, the outcome and statistics can be added to the accumulated records of either or both teams through the Stats Keeper utility. There is no reward for eye-hand coordination and no reason to feel pressured by even a tense last-minute goal-line stand. The clock always stops long enough for one to input his/her two-digit code and there is no penalty for delay of game. By the way, despite the range of other choices, there is no way to control who is on the field through substitutions. Neither can one trade players between two teams or make other roster changes without a supplementary disk. Injuries do not play a part in this simulation.

Let the Season Begin

While the head-to-head mode of the game is enjoyable, the *other* mode of play available in the game, the actual *NFL Pro League Football*, may be more interesting to statistics players, as well as being better conceived and considerably more innovative in terms of game design. The designers have captured the essence of football strategy for a speedy game replay that does not require players to choose each play.

The key feature is the "Game Plan," a one-page summary of the overall strategy for a player to select, bearing in mind the player's

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MEGATRAVELLER 3	NOVEMBER
Strike Commander (IBM)	NOVEMBER
Secret of Monkey Island 2	DECEMBER
Armada 2525	DECEMBER

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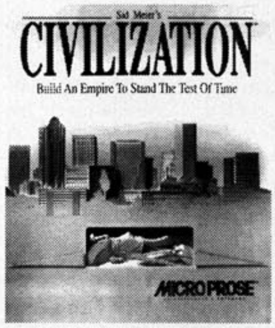
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Castle of Dr. Brain	34	-
Champions Krynn	34	34
Curse Azure Bonds	34	34
Dusk of the Gods	38	-
Eye of Beholder	34	34
Eye of Beholder 2	38	-
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Heroes Quest	39	39
Heroes Quest 2	39	39
Kings Bounty	19	34
Kings Quest 1-3	34	34
Kings Quest 4	39	39
Kings Quest 5 VGA	39	39
Kings Quest 5 EGA	42	-
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Pirates	15	15
Pool of Darkness	34	39
Pool of Radiance	34	34
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Secret Monkey Isle	29	39
Secret Silver Blades	34	34
Shadow Sorcerer	34	34
Ultima 6	45	-
Ultima 7	45	-
Uncharted Waters	43	-

PRESENT

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Count Down	39	-
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STRATEGY

PRE WW II

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Annals of Rome	15	-
Bandit Kings China (KOEI)	39	39
Battles of Napoleon (SSI)	34	-
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Civil War Vol. 2 (SSG)	25	-
Civil War Vol. 3 (SSG)	25	-
Dec/Gettysburg (final)(TIGL)	34	-
Genghis Khan (KOEI)	39	39
Gettysburg (SSI)	39	-
Gold of Americas (SSG)	28	28
Grand Fleet (SIMCAN)	39	-
Knights of Sky (MICROPR)	34	-
L'Empereur	38	-
Medieval Lords (SSI)	39	-
No Greater Glory (SSI)	45	-
Nobunaga's Amb. 2 (KOEI)	39	-
Prelude to Jutland (GQ)	29	-
Red Baron VGA (DYNAMIX)	37	37
Romance 3 Kingdoms 2	43	-
Warlords/Enhanced (SSG)	34	34
War of the Lance (SSI)	34	-

WORLD WAR II

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Action Stations V. 3.0	32	32
Action N. Atlantic (GQ)	29	-
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Ger. Raider Atlantis (GQ)	29	-
Banzai (GQ)	29	-
B. Tank Barbarosa (S.C.)	39	-
Bismarck (GQ)	29	-
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Fleet Med (SIM CAN)	39	39
Halls Montezuma (SSG)	27	34
In Harms Way (SIM CAN)	39	39
Kreigsmarine (SIM CAN)	39	39
Long Lance (SIM CAN)	39	39
Malta Storm (SIM CAN)	39	39
Mariana's Turkey Shoot	29	-
Midway (GQ)	29	-
MBT Kursk (SIM CAN)	39	39
P-38	20	-
P-80	20	-
Pacific Storm (SIM CAN)	39	39
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F-15 II	34	34
F-15 II Desert Storm Disk	21	-
F-19 Stealth Fight (MICROPR)	39	39
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5th Eskrada (SIM CAN)	39	39
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and the opponents' team's strengths and weaknesses. There is a chance to choose the percentage of time to pass under various down-and-yardage situations, the percentage of times to blitz, play receivers loose or tight, and so on. There is even the chance to program in half-time corrections, changes in the plan that will be implemented if the team is ahead or behind by more than a specified number of points.

The Game Plan screen is intimidating at first glance, and fortunately the computer generates a proposed Game Plan for any set of opponents to help the novice, who would not really have the knowledge to plan a skillful outing against Joe Montana and his friends. As well as filing the Game Plan, one also has most of the same choices as in head-to-head play. However, on the reviewer's copy it was not possible to set weather conditions manually as promised in the manual.

After the Game Plans have been filed, the simulation takes only a couple of minutes or less to play itself out (depending on the computer's processing speed). The graphics, again, are unexciting. One can watch a sideline view of the ball sliding back and forth across the yard lines as drives churn on or sputter out, or look down on x's and o's scurrying around following their patterns. The same text summary of each play is available as in the other mode. It goes by too fast to read, but can be printed out for later study.

To test the realism of the statistical model, the default Game Plans were used to play out a full conference schedule. It took only a couple of evenings to replay the 1990 NFC conference schedule. *NFL Pro League Football* passed with flying colors. The strength of the simulation showed up not so much in the standings as in the league leader lists, where many of the right names appeared, and even if they did not, the totals of the league leaders were in line with the real-world results.

In the replay, the divisional champs were Philadelphia (14-2), Chicago (9-7), and San Francisco (13-3) — two out of three correct. As in the real world, Montana and Simms were among the conference's leading passers; Byner, Anderson, Sanders and Smith the leading rushers and Rison, Sharpe, Rice and Ellard the leading receivers. Chicago and Philadelphia were the leading rushing teams in the simulation and also in the real world. Other results did not mimic reality so closely but were still impressive.

Behind the Scenes

The Game Plan feature makes *NFL Pro League Football* a useful foundation for a fantasy league, since managers can mail, phone in or fax their Game Plans to the site where the games are being played. A full league of 28 teams can be accommodated in this way. The stats can be saved and studied after each game.

The statistical depth of the simulation is most impressive. A combination of raw statistics and quality ratings is stored for individuals and teams. There are good printing capabilities for statistics, standings, all-time records and league leaders at any point in the replay of a season. To replay a season, one must set up a league (which can be an exact copy of a recent NFL year or contain a mixture of teams from different years).

Some of the menus are *not* user-friendly, and maneuvering through the utilities to get the information one wants can be heavy going. One first has to learn the difference between "Options" and "Preferences" (and between "Preferences 1" and "Preferences 2"). The so-called "Auto Update" feature takes too many confusing key-strokes to be called "Auto." One has to learn that the correct menu choice for updating the stats, oddly, is "Don't Print." Sometimes one thinks one is exiting to the main menu but is taken out of the program altogether. Also, setting up a league can be tricky. Though the game gives no clue, one has to learn to enter "90" for the year, not "1990." Though the screen said that the Escape key would cancel an incorrect selection of teams, it did not do so on the reviewer's copy and the process had to be repeated from the start.

Despite some weaknesses in the interface and uninspiring graphics, the robust statistical foundation of *NFL Pro League Football* makes this an impressive product. The Game Plan feature makes it into a learning tool with considerable depth. One can get an advanced education in football strategy by replaying a particular matchup several times with different strategic choices on the Game Plan. It will keep flawless records for a fantasy league. Those who live and die by statistics in a football simulation could not ask for more. **CGW**

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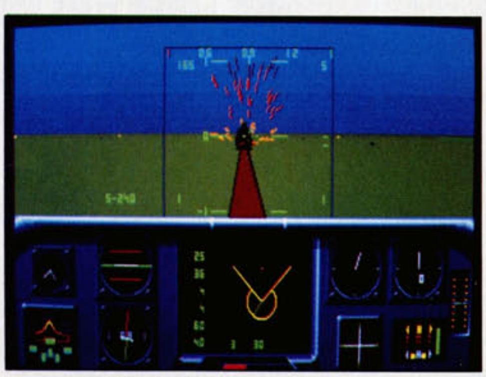
Kicking Up a Storm

by Paul Rigby

Digital Integration has stepped upon that ol' gulf War bandwagon with a new flight simulation called *Tornado*. The opposition? The Iraqis, of course. A number of mission types and configurations will be available plus a campaign that will include the option of interacting with the ground forces and the use of deception as a tactic both on the ground and in the air.



Tornado



MiG-29M Super Fulcrum

According to **Digital Integration**'s Dave Marshall, the new project will feature, "...real airfield layouts: multi-runway, multi-taxiway and perimeter tracks.... All of the buildings, structures and so on are all from diagrams, plans and photographs. There are several hangars, hardened aircraft shelters, all from RAF plans." Allegedly, the game will allow computer pilots to fly down valleys, cruise above rivers, follow railways, parallel highways and so on. The game is even supposed to feature multi-line railways running through stations, with sidings, etc.

Marshall states that the simulation will still run at close to 20 frames a second, even on a 386 with full detail selected. This is particularly significant when simulating an aircraft such as the Tornado. The main reason for concern is because the screen will be full of speed-sapping polygons as the aircraft hugs the terrain during flight. The high percentage of high relief areas has compounded the programming challenge for the design team.

Even the missions designed for *Tornado* will endeavor to imitate reality more effectively. The design twist in mission development is the requirement for the computer pilot to use co-ordinated attacks (from different directions onto the same target) and rely on dissimilar mission flights using specialized aircraft to accomplish specialized jobs on one's behalf. *Tornado* will be released late next year on all formats.

MiG-29M Super Fulcrum is the sequel to another **Domark** (distributed in the United States by **Accolade**) flight simulation, *Mig-29 Fulcrum*, created by the ex-British Aerospace team — **Simis**. The aim of the game is to progress from the player's solitary airfield, on the western side of the map, and hit all manner of enemy installations on the enemy's eastern area to, finally, take the enemy HQ. The play is dynamic, so the enemy will always be on the move, advancing and repairing battle damage. Therefore, hit a bridge and expect it to be out of action for a relatively short time until the enemy can initiate and complete needed repairs.

The player can approach the task of taking the rebel HQ in a number of different ways. One can break enemy supply lines, clear the air bases, hit the strategic installations and then go for the HQ. Other plans of action may be just as effective, however. The player receives a choice of two flight models: the advanced flight model (present on PC only) and a standard flight model present on all other platforms. The latter is, it appears, the same model as used in the original product. Out now on all formats.

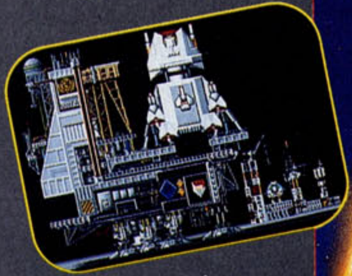
Another **Simis** product that is still under development is *Harrier*, a V/STOL simulation in which the player competes in two different roles. According to **Simis**' Jonathan Newth, players take on the task of "campaign manager," arming the plane and commanding it, as well as up to twelve other aircraft and attendant ships, as to "...what headings to fly/sail on and what targets to take out." In addition to carrying out their respective orders concerning primary and secondary targets, the computer intelligence has enough "sense" so that the assigned aircraft will not blindly hit the deceased target (the ex-target, the target which is no more, gone to join the heavenly choir — to paraphrase a Python) but will, rather, revert to the secondary target.

One starts out with a limited and well-defined set of resources. So, the longer

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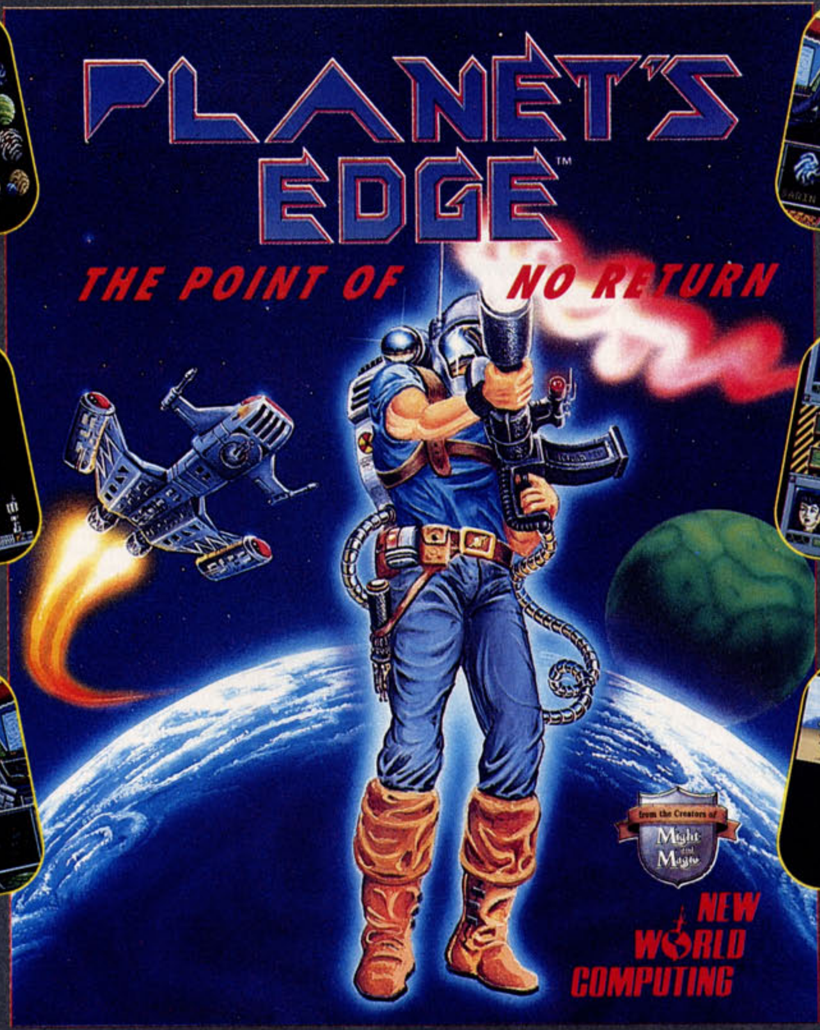
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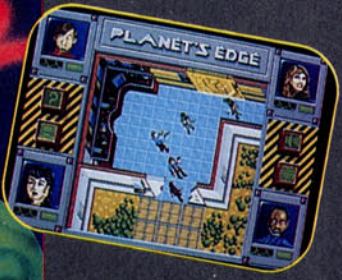


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one plays, the more likely one's resources are to run down. Of course, there is a limited amount of re-supply occurring in the background, as well, but attrition of supplies is a significant motivation in expanding one's influence.

The commander's major task is to remove the targets/insurgents on the islands. How this is accomplished, though, is open. One decides upon what missions to fly and what targets to take out.

To assist in planning, players will get information via simulated satellite photos. Reflecting reality, the photos will not offer 100% reliable information, owing to the vagaries of interpreting such photos.

The second major role for the player is, of course, flying the plane itself. Maneuvers, such as VIFFing (dramatically braking in mid-air by reversing the thrust nozzles), will be obtainable in Harrier. Other basics like 'ski-jump' take-offs on the carriers have also been integrated. In addition, the actual undercarriage has been simulated. So, the aircraft can roll off the end of the aircraft carrier and tip off the edge rather than just rolling off in a flat horizontal plane. This feature will extend to the terrain. Being a Harrier, it can land [almost] anywhere.

Two versions of the game will appear. One will be for fast PCs — very fast 286s or 386 machines and above. The other will be for slower 286s, Amigas and STs. The differences? Slower machines will be able to do and display less — although precise details are lacking at the moment. Also, the terrain will be 3D on fast PCs but flat 2D on slow PCs. Release will be via **Domark** but no release dates have yet been finalized.

U.S. Gold is distributing a new product in the UK by **Delphine**, publisher of *Future Wars* (**Interplay** distributes **Delphine** products in the U.S.). Known as *Another World*, the company must have had the co-designer of *Future Wars* on an adrenaline drip while he worked on this product. He has honed his new adventure system to a point whereby this first by-product can be poised for release. Utilizing a 3D system with many cinematic techniques such as pan, zoom, close-up and so on, *Another World* follows the exploits of a nuclear scientist who, as the victim of an experiment 'gone wrong,' finds himself in an alien world. Escaping from the planet is the task in hand and puzzle-solving combined with fast reflexes is the primary method of achieving this situation. Release is destined for all formats by the year's end.

Note: The above games, and any of the other games mentioned in "Over There" in past issues, can be obtained from:

Computer Adventure World, 318 Kensington, Liverpool, England, L7 0EY. Telephone: 01144-51-263-6306

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I salute Johnny Wilson for giving us a new kind of book about the earth and the terrestrial planets. - James Lovelock

The SimEarth Bible is a winning strategy guide to SimEarth, as well as a fact-filled guide to Earth sciences and theories of the balance of life on the planet. Wilson discusses the common mistakes you may be tempted to make and encourages you to examine new approaches to planetary problem solving.

The Official Guide To Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon

by Russell Sipe COMPUTE Books $12.95 U.S. $16.50

The best book on Railroad Tycoon. If you love Railroad Tycoon get Russell Sipe's book. - Jerry Pournelle, BYTE Magazine

Sipe's book will add immeasurably to your enjoyment of Railroad Tycoon. - Neil Shapiro, PC Games Magazine

Here are just a few of the things you'll learn: get the answers to puzzling economic forces in the game; learn to defeat each of the tycoons; manupulate the stock market to your advantage; and learn optimal building and survey techniques.

The SimCity PLANNING COMMISSION HANDBOOK

by Johnny L. Wilson Osborne McGraw-Hill $14.95

Each time we read this book we learned something, because it explains the theory behind the game and doesn't just list one-two-three hints. - START Magazine

Reading the draft for The Sim City Planning Commission Handbook has been quite educational and entertaining for me, but also strangely familiar, as I go through the discovery process once again. - Will Wright, designer of SimCity

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The Mysterious Missing Comparison Chart

In CGW #89, Win Rogers' article on Earl Weaver Baseball 2.0 *referred to the following chart. We apologize for not providing the chart with the article.*

This chart provides a comparison of five different computer baseball games. All five games have: EGA, keyboard and joystick support; no mouse support. They have the capacity for 25-man rosters of actual major league players (no active players) with real statistics and ratings. (*TLUB* must have 10 pitchers, 15 non-pitchers.) All five games can store fielding records for players at two different positions. All games also contain separate data disks for additional teams.

Default lefty/righty breakdowns are added if they are not actually provided on the data disks (these are present, but not visible, in *EWBB* 1.5). All games also include the capabilities of generating or storing lineups that include platooning considerations and of accumulating statistics from simulated games and showing league leaders.

Finally, all of the games described feature at least three play modes: play and manage, manage only or computer manage modes for either team. In addition, different skill levels are available in play and manage mode. The latest games feature superfast mode(s) for quick replay and accurate simulation of actual parks with grass/turf, indoor/outdoor, wind, and fence distance and height factors (although they are present but not visible in *TLUB*). **CGW**

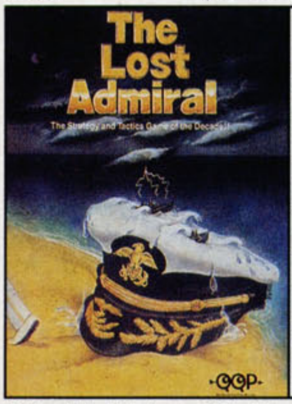
	***EWBB* 1.5**	***EWBB* 1.5 & COMM DISK**	***EWBB* 2.0**	***EWBB* 2.0 & COMM DISK**	***Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball***
Visual Effects					
choose ballpark	Y	Y	Y	Y	N (set for each roster)
slot modify ballpark	Y	Y	N	Y	N
choose camera angles	N	N	Y	Y	N
choose team colors	Y	Y	N	Y	N (set for each roster)
slot change game speed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
instant replay	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
access opponent's roster	Y	Y	Y	Y	(must change mode)
Rosters					
# of teams/players provided	8/200	8/200	9/225	9/225	26/780
change player stats	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
add new players	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
clone players	Y	Y	N	Y	N
trade players	Y	Y	N	Y	Y (must be pitcher for pitcher, non-pitcher for non-pitcher)
size of reserve squad	0	0	unavailable	unlimited	5 (must be 2 pitchers, 3 non-pitchers)
move players off reserve	N	N	N	Y	Y
Statistics					
ratings automatically calculated	N	N	N	Y	Y
download stats from on-line service	N	N	N	Y	N
transfer stats to/from Lotus	N	N	N	Y	N
manager profiles in use	N	N	Y	Y	N
modify manager profiles	N	N	N	Y	N
Printing Support					
print rosters/lineups	Y	Y	to disk only	Y	N
print player stats	Y	Y	N	Y	N
print box scores	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y (Featured & Exhibition games only)
print standings, schedules	N	Y	N	Y	N
Configuration					
min RAM required (K)	384-512	384-512	640	640	640
min processor speed (MHz)	4.7	4.7	12	12	10
disk space required (K)	504	685	730	1,276*	4,610*
sound board support	N	N	Y	Y	Y
CGA support	Y	Y	N	N	N
VGA support	N	N	Y	Y	Y
access teams in subdirectories	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Other					
choose DH	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y (league play: AL, with; NL, without)
play full season	N	Y	N	Y	Y (with limited options)
control fielders	N	N	N	N	Y
one-pitch mode	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y (but not in play-and-manage mode)
list price	was $29.95	was $49.90	$49.95	$79.90	$49.95

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- Kampfgruppe $37
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- Kursk Campaign $39
- Long Lance $39
- MacArthur's War $29
- Main Bttle Tank C Grm $39

IBM WARGAMES

- Main Bttle Tank N Grm $39
- Main Bttle Tank ME $39
- Malta Storm $39
- Man of War $39
- Mare Nostrum $28
- Marianas Turkey Shoot $28
- Midway $22
- Moscow Campaign $39
- Nam 65-75 $45
- Northern Fleet $39
- North & South $27
- Operation Overlord $39
- Pacific Storm Midway $39
- Pacific Storm Solomons $39
- Panzer Battles $22



'WORLDS AT WAR' from **RAW SOFTWARE** is a game of naval combat on a galatic scale. Simple in concept, you can play the tactical study for an hour or the campaign game for a weekend. Features include hidden movement, random map generation, design your own task forces, capture planets to build more units. **CGW** said "...like **EMPIRE**, what this game has is play-value". **$29**

- Patriot $38
- Patriot Battle Sets Ea $24
- Patriot Editor $27
- Patton v Rommel $15
- Patton Strikes Back $37
- Prelude to Jutland $28
- Red Lightning $12
- Return to the Falklands $28
- Rising Sun $28
- Rommel at El Alamein $39
- Rommel at Gazala $39
- Rommel North Africa $22
- Rorke's Drift $34
- Sea Power & the State $39
- Second Front $37
- Seventh Fleet $39

IBM STRATEGY

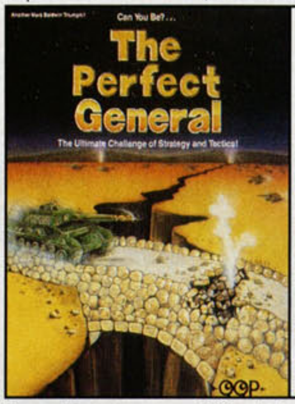
- Ancient Art War $31
- Ancient Art War at Sea $31
- Ancient Art War in Sky $34
- Armada 2525 $32
- Balance of the Planet $19
- Bandit Kings of China $37
- Battle Isle $32
- Big Business $32
- Black Gold $10
- Breach 2 Enhanced $19
- Breach 2 Scenario Disk $15
- Castles $36
- Castles Disk 1 $19
- Centurion $19
- Civilization $39
- Command HQ $34
- Crisis in the Kremlin $37
- Defender of the Crown $12
- Designasaurus 2 $28
- Dino Wars $28
- DRAGON Force $31
- Dragon Lord $12
- Dune $34
- Empire $31
- Final Conflict $34
- FireTeam 2200 $29
- FireTeam Const Kit $25
- Fort Apache $34
- Full Metal Planet $31
- Genghis Khan $37
- Gold of the Americas $12
- Guns or Butter $12
- Hidden Agenda $39
- Imperium $26
- Lemmings $32
- Lemmings Data Disk $19
- L'Empereur $37
- Liberty or Death $37
- Lost Admiral $34
- Lost Patrol $12
- Medieval Lords $37
- Medieval Warriors $19
- Merchant Colony $34
- Millenium $27
- Nobunaga 1 or 2 $37
- Nuclear War $12
- Objection $34
- Objection Enh $89
- Ogre $19
- Omega $30
- Operation Combat $29
- Overlord $28

IBM WARGAMES

- Stalingrad Campaign $39
- Storm Across Europe $37
- Suez 73 $29
- To The Rhine $39
- Typhoon of Steel $37
- UMS 1 $19
- UMS 2 Nations at War $34
- UMS 2 Desert Storm $20
- UMS 2 Planet Editor $28
- V for Victory $38
- Vulcan $34
- War in the Falklands $28
- Warship Changed Hist $28
- Waterloo $12
- Western Front $37
- White Death $29

IBM STRATEGY

- Paladin $28
- Perfect General $34
- Perfect General Disk 2 $23
- Populous $21
- Populous & Simcity $34
- Populous Promise Land $14
- Populous 2 $38

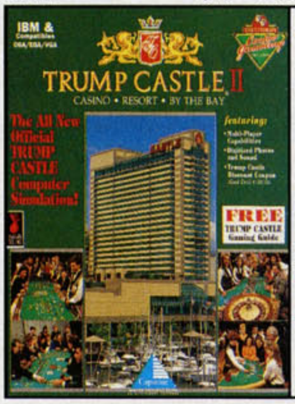


'PERFECT GENERAL' from **QQP INC** is a turn based ground war game. Features 12 years of play testing, great maps in VGA, easy to use mouse or keyboard interface, 14 scenarios, very strong artificial intelligence, hidden movement, line of sight option, in depth player ranking system, saves your career history as you play, 2 player option, modem play, sound board support. **$34**

- Power Monger $38
- Project Moonbase $24
- Project Space Station $15
- Railroad Empire $34
- Railroad Tycoon $34
- Reach for the Stars 3 $12
- Renegade Legn Intcptr $37
- Revolution 76 $32
- Romanc 3 Kngdm 1or2 $42
- Rules of Engagement $38
- Second Conflict $34
- Seven Cities of Gold $12
- Siege $38
- Sim Ant $37
- SimCity $29
- SImCity & Populous $34
- SimCity Graphic 1 or 2 $23
- SimCity Terrain Editor $15
- SimEarth $41
- Star Control $29
- Starfleet 1 or 2 $38
- Stellar Crusade $12
- Strategic Forces $19
- Sword of Aragon $28
- Theatre of War $32
- Theatre Sets $21
- Visions of Aftermath $12
- Warlords $29
- Worlds at War $29

IBM ADVENTURE

- Advnts Willie Beamish $34
- All Dogs Go to Heaven $19
- Altered Destiny $34
- Arthur Quest Excaliber $12
- B.A.T. $19

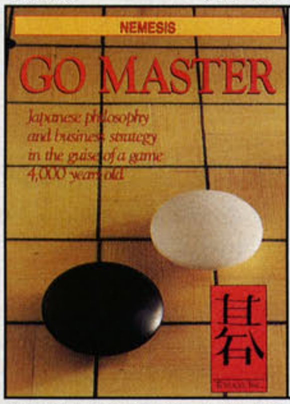


'TRUMP CASTLE II' from **CAPSTONE** puts you in Atlantic City at the Trump Castle Casino Resort with actual digitized images and sound from the casino itself. Features include 256 color VGA graphics, sound board support, digitized animations and multiplayer capability for six gambling games, baccarat, blackjack, craps, roulette, video poker, and slot machines. **$32**

- B.A.T. 2 $32
- Black Cauldron $14
- Castle of Dr Brain $29
- Chmbr Sci Mutnt Prstss $15
- Code Name: Iceman $21
- Colonel Bequest $21
- Colonel Bequest 2 $34
- Conquests of Camelot $21

IBM ADVENTURE

- Conquests of Longbow $34
- Conspiracy Deadlock $34
- Countdown $37
- Covert Action $29
- Crime Does Not Pay $34
- Crime Wave $37
- Cruise for a Corpse $34
- Dark Heart of Uukrul $34
- David Wolf:Scrt Agnt $15
- Deja Vu $12
- Deja Vu 2 Lost in LV $12
- Die Hard $28
- Don't Go Alone $12
- Duck Tales $28
- Earthrise $12



'NEMESIS GO VER 5' from **TOYOGO** is the ultimate computer **GO** program. With the simplicity of checkers and the complexity of chess, GO is both an enjoyable recreation and a serious strategy game. **GO MASTER** is a basic GO player and tutor. **JOSEKI GENIUS** adds complex corner openings. **TACTICAL WIZARD** is the ultimate tutor offering in depth tactical analysis. GO is 4000 years old. **$39**

- East v West:Berlin '48 $9
- Eco Quest 1 $34
- Felony $12
- Fool's Errand $12
- Free DC $34
- Future Wars $28
- Gamma Force $12
- Geisha $32
- Gold Rush $24
- Grail Quest $27
- Harley Davidson $32
- Heart of China $34
- Honeymooners $12
- Hostage $12
- Hound of Shadow $19
- Indy Jones L Crsd ega $22

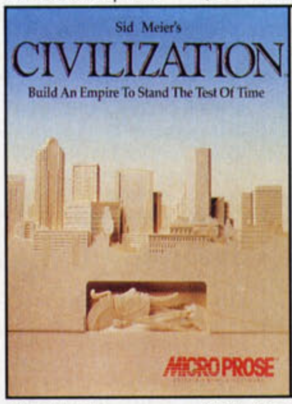
IBM ADVENTURE

- Indy Jones L Crsd vga $28
- Indy Jones Fate Atlantis $38
- It Came from the Desert $19
- James Bond Stealth Aff $34
- Jetsons $19
- Journey $12
- King's Quest 1Enhncd $34
- King's Quest 2 or 3 $28
- King's Quest 4 $34
- King's Quest 5 ega $34
- King's Quest 5 vga $39
- Kristal $15
- Lane Mastodon $12
- Leather Goddesses $12
- Leather Goddesses 2 $42
- Leisure Suit Lrry 1 ega $16
- Leisure Suit Lrry 1 vga $34
- Leisure Suit Lrry 2 $34
- Leisure Suit Lrry 3 $34
- Leisure Suit Lrry 5 $34
- License to Kill $26
- Loom $19
- Lost in LA $37
- Lost Treasures Infocom $59
- Magnetic Scrolls Bndl $37
- Manhunter NY or SF $28
- Maniac Mansion w HBK $18
- Martian Memorandum $37
- Mean Streets $37
- Mixed Up Mthr Goose $26
- Mixed Up Fairy Tales $26
- Moebius $28
- Murder by the Dozen $15
- Murder Club $28
- Murders in Space $12
- Neuromancer $15
- Oregon Trail $28
- Police Quest 1 $28
- Police Quest 2 or 3 $34
- Prince of Persia $25
- Rise of the Dragon $34
- Robin Hood $34
- SDI $12
- Search for the King $37
- Secrt Monky Islnd 1ega $28
- Secrt Monky Islnd 1vga $38
- Secrt Monky Islnd 2 $38
- Sex Olympics $24
- Sex Vixens from Space $12
- Shogun $12
- Sinbad $12
- Snoopy $9
- Sleeping Gods Lie $27
- Space Quest 1 $34
- Space Quest 2 $28
- Space Quest 3 or 4 $34
- Spellcasting 101 or 201 $34
- Startrek 5 $12
- Startrek 25th Aniversry $36
- Street Rod 1 $19
- Street Rod 2 $28
- Time Quest $29
- Total Eclipse $12
- Train $6
- Uninvited $12
- Universe 1 -3 Ea $34
- War in Middle Earth $15
- Whales $34
- Where Amrcas Pst CSD $37

IBM MAC & AMIGA GAMES FOR LESS

IBM TRADITIONAL

3D Pool	$25
Advance to Boardwalk	$15
Amarillo Slim Poker	$15
Battlechess 1 or 2	$31
Big Boggle	$15
Ceasar's Palace	$15
Centerfold Squares	$21



'CIVILIZATION' from **MICROPROSE** "is a competitive multi-player strategy game with a great deal of replayability" **CGW**. You explore cities, continents, and the world in an **EMPIRE** like way. You make economic decisions prioritizing technological growth in order to advance your civilization more rapidly than the other players. The best of both **SIMCITY** & **EMPIRE**. **$39**

Check Mate	$36
Chessmaster 2000	$27
Chessmaster 2100	$31
Chessmaster 3000	$32
Clue Master Detective	$15
Cribbage King/Gin King	$19
Crossword Magic	$32
Dealers Choice Poker	$34
Edwrd O Thrp Blck Jck	$29
Electric Jigsaw	$15
Family Crosswords	$28
Femmes Fatale	$28
Games People Play	$27
GO Master Deluxe	$89
GO Master 5 Deluxe	$109
GO Joseki Genius	$39
GO Junior	$19
GO Master	$34
GO Master 5	$39
GO Master 5 Toolkit	$39
GO Scribbler	$34
GO Tactical Wizard	$39
Grand Slam Bridge	$24
Hollywood Squares	$15
Hoyle's Games 1 or 2	$21
Hoyle's Games 3	$28
Ishido	$34
Jeopardy 1 or 2	$10
Jeopardy Silver Edition	$15
Jones in the Fast Lane	$24
Knights of Crystallion	$37
Lexicross	$25
Living Jigsaws	$9
Mental Blocks	$15
Monopoly	$24



'STARTREK: THE 25th ANNIVERSARY' from **INTERPLAY** combines a realistic 3D space flight simulator with an in depth role-playing game. Pilot the Enterprise through a simulation similar to Wing Commander. Discover dozens of planets, beam down to explore them. Each planet with its own unique adventure. Features point-and-click, 256 color VGA & adlib support. **$36**

IBM ADVENTURE

Where Europe CSD	$30
Where USA CSD	$30
Where World CSD	$27
Where World CSD Dlx	$49
Where Time CSD	$30
Wonderland	$34
Zak McKracken w HBK	$18

IBM TRADIONTAL

Penthouse Jigsaw	$24
Price is Right	$15
Prime TIme Hits 1 or 2	$25
Puzzle Gallery	$26
Puzznic	$25
Rack'em	$12
Risk	$24
Sargon 4 or 5	$34
Scrabble	$24
Scrabble Deluxe	$34
Scruples	$28
Shanghai 2	$31
Solitaire Royale	$24
Sorry	$15
Spot	$24



'THE TWO TOWERS' from **INTERPLAY** is a roleplaying game based on Book 2 of the **LORD OF THE RINGS**. Battle orcs, trolls, wargs, ghosts, & oliphaunts. Travel through Fangorn Forest, over mountain passes, past the fortress cave complex, through the marsh and arrive at the two towers. Features automapping, digitized speech, point & click interface, 256 color VGA & sound board support. **$37**

Stratego	$31
Strip Poker 2	$28
Strip Poker 3	$31
Strip Poker Data 1-5 Ea	$19
Super Tetris	$34
Tetris	$24
Trivial Pursuit	$26
Trump Castle	$25
Trump Castle 2	$32
Vegas Casino 1 or 2	$10
Vegas Gambler	$28
Video Poker	$32
Wheel of Fortune 1-3 Ea	$10
Wheel of Fortune Gold	$15
Wrld Chmp Backgamn	$24
Wrld Chmp Cribbage	$24

IBM SPORTS

4D Boxing	$32
4th & Inches	$12
4th & Inches Teams	$10
1992 Winter Olympics	$32
ABC Boxing	$32
ABC Mon Night	$37
All Star Sports Pak	$34
APBA Baseball	$28
APBA Encyclopedia	$34
APBA General Manager	$31
APBA Innovator	$34
APBA Stat Master	$39
APBA Wizard	$31
APBA 1908 - 91 Ea	$21
APBA Basketball	$28
APBA Bowling	$19
APBA Football	$49
Basketball Challenge	$28
B ball Ch. 1987 - 88 Ea	$13
B ball Ch. 1989 - 90 Ea	$17
Bo Jackson Baseball	$32
Blades of Steel	$26
Championship Baseball	$9
Cycles Grand Prix	$28
Daily Double Horse	$19
Days of Thunder	$25
Fast Break	$17
Games Winter Challenge	$37
GFL Champ Football	$9
Grand Prix	$24
Grand Prix Circuit	$17
Greg Norman Shark Att	$25
Gretsky Hockey 2	$34
Gretsky League	$26
Hardball	$12
Hardball 2	$28
Hat Trick	$9
Indianapolis 500	$19
Joe Montana Football	$31
John Elway's QB	$6
King's Beach Volleyball	$15
Lakers v Celtics	$19
LH 3 in 1 Football	$30
LH Boxing	$30
LH College Basketball	$30
LH Full Count Baseball	$30
LH Hockey	$30
LH Pro Basketball	$30
LH Team Disks	$15
LH League Leaders	$15
LH Utility Disks	$15
Links Golf	$37
Links Course 1 -5 Ea	$17
Low Blow	$24
Madden Football	$32
Madden TD 89	$18
Madden TD 90	$18
Madden Football 2	$32
Magic Johnson Fst Brk	$6
Magic Johnson MVP	$18
Mario Andretti Racing	$32
Mean 18 Golf	$27
Mean 18 Course 5 & 6	$25
ML Basbll Mngr's Chllng	$24
ML World Series Disks	$17
ML TD 1982 - 1990 Ea	$17
ML All Stars	$17
ML Franchise Disks Ea	$20
ML Box Score Stats	$20

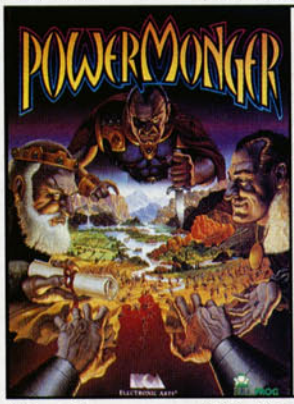
IBM SPORTS

ML GM Disk 3	$25
ML Roster Security	$20
Microleague Basketball	$28
ML Personal Pro Golf	$28
Microleague Football	$28
ML Football Deluxe	$43
ML Ftball GM/Owners	$25



'CARRIERS AT WAR' from **SSG** is WW2 carrier warfare. Explore Pearl Harbor, Santa Cruz, Coral Sea, Midway, Eastern Solomons, & Marianas Turkey Shoot. Great graphics and simulation. You must seek out the enemy carriers, fleets and aircraft before they find you. Hundreds of ships & aircraft are individually modeled. With point & click interface, 256 color VGA & sound board support. **$37**

ML Ftball Team Disks	$17
ML Wrestling	$28
Mike Ditka Football	$34
Motocross	$9
NASCAR Challenge	$31
NCAA College Football	$36
NFL Challenge	$60
NFL 1984 - 1987 Ea	$15
NFL 1988 - 1991 Ea	$22
NFL Preseason Disk	$22
NFL All Star Teams	$22
NFL College Alumni	$22
NFL College Teams	$19
NFL Dream Teams	$20
NFL Greatest Teams	$22
NFL Roster Editor	$20
NFL Situation Editor	$20
NFLP roleague Football	$49
Nicklaus Greatest 18	$34
Nicklaus Unlimited Golf	$37
NG Clip Art	$17
NG Course 2	$6
NG Course 1 & 2	$19
NG Course 3, 4, or 5	$15
Over the Net Volleyball	$24
Pete Rose Baseball	$9
PGA Tour Golf	$32
PGA Tour Golf Disk 1	$17
PGA Tour Golf Ltd Edt	$45
Pro Football Analyst	$34
Pro Tennis Tour 2	$32
RBI 2	$32
Reel Fish'n	$12
Serve & Volley	$12
Skate or Die	$16



'POWER MONGER' from **ELECTRONIC ARTS** is a unique strategy game. A living world with forests, mountains, waterfalls, rivers, towns, farmers, shepherds, merchants, fisherman, weather, homes, jobs & NPCs with individual identities. Plan, produce, invent, negotiate, bribe, recruit subordinates, & feed your people. 3D zoom & rotate, play by modem, random maps & great graphics. **$34**

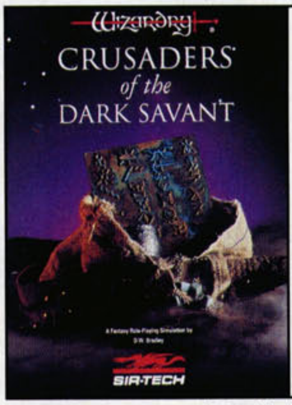
Skie or Die	$16
Sport of Kings	$18
Super Car Pack	$37
Tennis Cup	$32
Tie Break Tennis	$27
TKO Boxing	$6
Tom Landry Football	$29
Tony LaRussa Basebll	$32

IBM SPORTS

T LaRussa Stadiums	$15
T LaR Teams1901-68	$15
TV Sports Basketball	$12
TV Sports Football	$12
Weaver Baseball 1.5	$19
Weaver Commissioner	$16
Weaver 1988 - 1989 Ea	$16
Weaver Baseball 2.0	$32
Weaver Commisnr 2.0	$21
Weaver 2.0 1990 Teams	$16
World Class Soccer	$28
1990 Stats/Mngr Profils	$16
Weaver 2.0 Comm Edt	$59

HINT BOOKS

688 Attack Sub	$10



'CRUSADERS OF THE DARK SAVANT: WIZARDRY 7' from **SIRTECH** is high tech fantasy roleplaying at its best. **WIZ 7** includes multiple beginnings, outdoor campaigns in caves, forests, rivers, dungeons, and a complete city. NPCs talk to each other & entire computer controlled parties compete with the player. Features point & click interface, 256 color VGA & sound board support. **$39**

Altered Destiny	$10
Bard's Tale 1 - 3 Ea	$10
Black Cauldron	$10
Buck Rogers 1 or 2	$10
Castle of Dr Brain	$10
Champions of Krynn	$10
Code Name Iceman	$10
Colonel Bequest 1 or 2	$10
Conquests of Camelot	$10
Conquests of Longbow	$10
Countdown	$10
Curse of Azure Bonds	$10
Death Knights of Krynn	$10
Dragons of Flame	$10
Drakkhen	$10
Elvira 1 or 2	$10

IBM AD & D

AD&D Bundle	$38
Champions of Krynn	$32
Curse of Azure Bonds	$32
Death Knights of Krynn	$32
Dragon Strike	$32
Dragons of Flame	$12
Eye of the Beholder	$32
Eye of the Beholder 2	$38
Gateway Savge Frontr	$32
Heroes of the Lance	$12
Pool of Darkness	$38
Pool of Radiance	$32
Secret of Silver Blades	$32
Shadow Sorcerer	$32
War of the Lance	$9

HINT BOOKS

Eye of Beholder 1 or 2	$10
Fountain of Dreams	$10
Free DC	$10
Gateway Savage Frntr	$10
Hard Nova	$10
Harpoon Battlebook	$19
Heart of China	$10
Hero's Quest 1 - 3 Ea	$10
Immortal	$10
Indy Jones Lst Crsade	$10
Indy Jones Fate Atlantis	$10
Keef the Thief	$10
King's Quest 1 - 5 Ea	$10
Leisr Suit Larry 1 - 5 Ea	$10
Loom	$10
Lord of the Rings 1 or 2	$10
Magic Candle 1 or 2	$10
Manhunter NY or SF	$10
Maniac Mansion	$10
Martian Dreams	$13
Martian Memorandum	$10
Mean Streats	$10
Might & Magic 1 or 2	$10
Might & Magic 3	$16
Planet's Edge	$16
Police Quest 1 - 3 Ea	$10
Pool of Darkness	$12
Pool of Radiance	$10
Power Monger	$10
Puzzle Gallery	$10
Quest for Clues 2, 3 or 4	$21
Quest for Glory 1 - 3 Ea	$10
Railroad Tycoon	$10
Rise of the Dragon	$10
Run 5 Issue 1 - 20 Ea	$6
Savage Empire	$10
Search for the King	$10
Secret Mnky Islnd 1 or 2	$10
Secret of Silver Blades	$10
Sentinal Worlds	$10
Shadow Sorcerer	$10
Simcity/Simearth	$20
Simearth	$19
Space Quest 1 - 4 Ea	$10
Starflight 1 or 2	$10
Strategy Plus 3 -11 Ea	$8
Strategy Plus 12-14	$4
Tunnels & Trolls	$10
Ultima 4 - 7 Ea	$10
Wizardry 6 Cosmic Frg	$12
Wizardry 7 Crusade	$12
Yeager's Air Combat	$19
Zak McKracken	$10

CHIPS & BITS CALL 800 -753 -GAME

IBM HARDWARE

Ad Lib Sound Card	$69
Ad Lib Gold Snd Crd	$199
Adlib Surround Sound	$49
Adlib Telephone Module	$49
Ad Lib MCA Snd Crd	$149
Ad Lib Visual Composr	$75
Ad Lib Speakers	$15

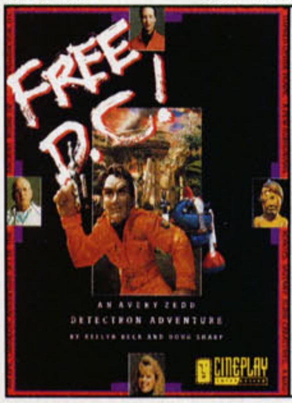


'ACTION STATIONS' from **RAW SOFTWARE** is a naval suface combat simulation. This game covers 1922 to 1945 in amazing detail. Features 21 status displays, 30 scenarios in the Atlantic, Med & Pacific, subordinate comanders, treatment of smoke, starshells, flares, radar, weather, shore batteries, aircraft spotting & more. Ships are modeled in detail. This is the premier **WW2** naval game. **$29**

Flight Stick	$46
Flight Stick w Falcon	$46
Maxx Control Yoke	$59
Rudder Peddals	$39
Mouse 3 Button	$29
Pro Audio Spectrum	$249
Sound Blaster	$109
Sound Blaster Pro	$199
Snd Blaster Speakers	$15
Snd Blaster Voice Edtr	$54
Sound Star Snd Board	$29
Thrustmaster Joystick	$79
Thrustmstr Weapn Cntrl	$79
Thunder Board SndBrd	$84
Thunder Board Spkrs	$15

IBM ROLE PLAYING

2400 AD	$28
Autoduel	$26
Bad Blood	$31
Bard's Tale 1	$15
Bard's Tale 2	$19
Bard's Tale 3	$31
Bard's Tale Cnstrctn St	$34
Battletech 1 or 2	$31
Blade Warrior	$12
Buck Rogers 1 or 2	$32
Captain Blood	$9
Captive	$30
CHARACTER EDITORS	$16
Conan	$32
Corporation	$32
Cybergenic Ranger	$32
Darklands	$39
Darkspyre	$32
Drakkhen	$37

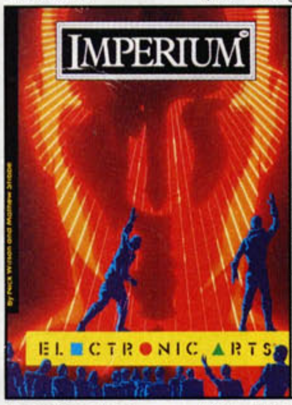


'FREE DC' from **CINEPLAY** is an unusual adventure game. Robot overlords have confined humanity to a zoo amid the ruins of Washington DC. Save the human race. Explore the ruins of ancient American monuments. Features digitized images & sound, live actors, NPC's with individual personalities, Point & click interface, 256 color VGA & sound board support. **$34**

Dragon Lord	$12
Dragon Wars	$31
Dusk of the Gods	$38
Earthling	$32
Elvira 1 Mistress Dark	$34
Elvira 2 Jaws Cerberus	$39
Escape from Hell	$17
Fire King	$7

IBM ROLEPLAYING

Flames of Freedom	$29
Fountain of Dreams	$15
Hard Nova	$19
Hero's Quest 1	$21
Hero's Quest 2 or 3	$34
Hyperspeed	$39
Immortal	$27
Journey	$12
Keef the Thief	$16
Keys to Maramon	$19
King's Bounty	$19
Knights of Legend	$30
Lord of the Rings 1	$34
Lord of the Rings 2	$37
Loremaster	$39



ELECTRONIC ARTS' 'IMPERIUM' is a space strategy game with amazing depth. You control the military, economic and political activities of the empire. Make alliances, design ships, build space navies, engage the enemy. Make economic treaties, set import export tax rates, control commodities, hoard the life extending drug nostrum. Delegate to your subordinate commanders. **$26**

Magic Candle 1	$15
Magic Candle 2	$38
Mechwarrior	$34
Megatraveller 1	$19
Megatraveller 2	$34
Megatraveller 3	$37
Midwinter 1	$24
Midwinter 2	$29
Might & Magic 1	$12
Might & Magic 2	$17
Might & Magic 1, 2&HB	$33
Might & Magic 3	$38
Mines of Titan	$12
Murder	$29
Paladin	$28
Paladin Scrolls Disk	$16

IBM ROLEPLAYING

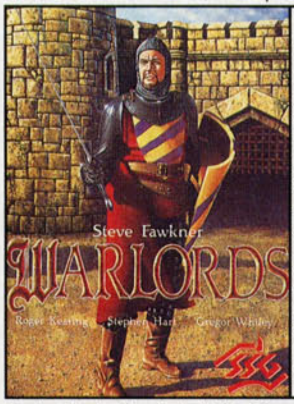
Phantasie 3	$12
Pirates	$9
Planet's Edge	$38
Prophecy 1	$12
Questron 2	$12
Rings of Medusa	$28
Scavengers	$34
Sentinal Worlds	$18
Shadowgate	$31
Sorcerian	$34
Space 1889	$19
Space Inc	$34
Space Rogue	$30
Space Wrecked	$32
Spirit of Excaliber	$29
Starflight 1 or 2	$19
Star Command	$34
Star Saga 1 or 2	$34
Sword of the Samurai	$9
Swrd Samrai & Pirates	$16
Tangled Tales	$21
Third Courier	$9
Times of Lore	$28
Tunnels & Trolls	$12
Twilight 2000	$34
Ultima Martian Dreams	$37
Ultima Savage Empire	$34
Ultima Trilogy	$35
Ultima 4 or 5	$35
Ultima 6 False Prophet	$39
Ultima 7 Black Gate	$45
Ultima Stygian Abyss	$48
Uncharted Waters	$42
Vengeance of Excalibur	$32
Windwalker	$28
Wizardry Trilogy	$32
Wizardry 4	$19
Wizardry 5	$32
Wizardry 6 Cosmic Frg	$37
Wizardry 7 Crusaders	$39

IBM ACTION /ARCADE

Airborne Ranger	$12
Altered Beast	$28
Amazing Spiderman	$15
Arachnaphobia	$28
Arkanoid 2	$28
Armor Alley	$27
Artura	$6
Back to the Future 2	$24
Barbarian	$9
Batman	$28
Batman The Movie	$24
Battle Master	$37
Battlestorm	$32
Bill & Ted's Exclint Adv	$19
Blockbuster	$6
Blockout	$28
Brain Blaster	$28
Bruce Lee Lives	$28
Budokan	$17
Colorado	$9
Continuum	$32
Crackdown	$19
Crossbow	$29
Dark Century	$29
Day of the Viper	$32
D Generation	$32
Dig Dug	$6
Double Dragon 2	$15

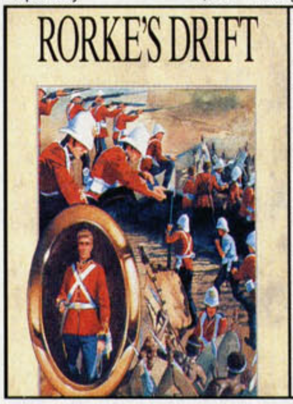
IBM ACTION /ARCADE

Dr Doom's Revenge	$12
Dragon's Lair 1 or 2	$38
Drgn's Lair Singe Cstl	$37
F40 Pursuit	$31
Faces Tetris 3	$25
Finale	$12
Fire Power	$24



'WARLORDS' from **STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP** is a huge eight player strategy game of empires and armies, castles and heroes, monsters and dragons. Capture cities to increase production. Use your heroes to form alliances. Improve castles and garrison troops to defend your empire. Lay siege to your enemies' castles to destroy his armies. Ambush his heroes to destroy leadership. **$29**

Freakn Funky Fuzzballs	$19
Galaxian	$6
Gauntlet 1 or 2	$9
Ghostbusters 2	$12
Golden Axe	$19
Gold of the Aztecs	$29
Grave Yardage	$12
Gremlins 2	$12
Guy Spy	$32
Harmony	$29
Hard Driving 2	$38
Home Alone	$27
Indy Jones Lst Crsade	$19
Knight Force	$31
Last Ninja 2	$24
Lemmings	$32
Living Jigsaws	$9
Loopz	$24
Low Blow	$12
Marble Madness	$15
Mavel Trilogy	$39
Miami Vice	$28
Monty Python	$15
Ms Pac Man	$9
Nevermind	$25
Night Breed	$15
Night Hunter	$25
Night Shift	$19
North & South	$27
Nova 9	$26
Obitus	$37
Obliterator	$6
Oil's Well	$21
Pac\ Man	$9
Paperboy	$27



'RORKE'S DRIFT' from **IMPRESSIONS** is a detailed simulation of the battle between 137 British soldiers & 4000 Zulu warriors that took place Jan 22 1879. You command the British in their attempt to hold out against the onslaught. You control each man, standing, sitting, prone, aiming, firing, reloading, running or walking. With 3D map, animated combat & movement mouse support & 256 color VGA. **$34**

Pick N Pile	$28
Pinball Construction	$9
Pipe Dream	$19
Powerdrift	$25
Powerdrome	$12
Psychic War	$28
Punisher	$12
Resolution 101	$24

IBM ACTION /ARCADE

Rocketeer	$32
Rotox	$24
Savage	$25
Silpheed	$21
Space Ace 1 or 2	$37
Space Harrier	$28
Space Wars	$37
Speedball	$12
Speedball 2	$27
Stellar 7	$21
Stormlord	$15
Super Off Road	$15
Super Pac Man	$9
Taking of Beverly Hills	$27
Targhan	$28



'COHORT' from **IMPRESSIONS** is an unusual wargame using a miniatures style interface to cover combat between roman legions & their enemies. Features animated combat & movement, 7 unit types, infantry, cavalry, & archers, user definable army composition, 4 different maps, scenario builder, stop & give orders real time combat, 256 color VGA, & sound board support. **$34**

Teenage Mntnt Nnja Trtl	$24
Tetris	$22
Terminator	$34
Thexder 1 or 2	$21
Treasure Trap	$10
Troika	$19
Vaxine	$24
Viking Child	$32
Volfied	$27
Welltris Tetris 2	$24
Wild Streets	$31
Wrath of the Demon	$37
Xenocide	$19
X Men 1	$9
X Men 2	$25
Zombie	$12

IBM SIMULATION

688 Attack Sub	$19
A10 Avenger	$43
A10 Tank Killer	$26
A10 Tank Killer 1.5	$34
Abrams Battle Tank	$12
Ace of Aces	$15
Aces of the Pacific	$39
Air Strike USA	$19
Appollo18	$28
Armor Geddon	$29
ATAC	$28
ATP	$37
Battle Command	$24
Battlehawks 1942	$21
Blue Max:Aces WW 1	$12
Cardinal of the Kremlin	$27
Carrier Command	$31
Conqueror Multi Tank	$27
Crash Course	$12
Das Boot Submarine	$19
Echelon	$39
Elite Plus	$29
Eye of the Storm	$32
F117A Nighthawk	$42
F14 Tomcat	$28
F15 Strike Eagle	$7
F15 Strike Eagle 2	$29
F15 SE2 Scenario Disk	$17
F16 Combat Pilot	$16
F19 Stealth Fighter	$39
F29 Retaliator	$34
Falcon	$34
Falcon AT	$37
Falcon 3.0	$42
Flight of the Intruder	$37
Flight Simulator 4.0	$39
Aircraft Scenry Design	$35
Fly Grand Canyon 3D	$45
Galactic Conqueror Tank	$31
Gunboat	$33
Gunship	$12
Gunship 2000	$39
Harrier Combat Sim	$9
Heatwave	$25
Hoverforce	$31
Hunt for Red October	$22
Hyperspeed	$39
Instnt Facilities Locator	$28
Jet	$12
Jet Fighter 2.0	$39
Knights of the Sky	$29
LHX Attack Chopper	$26
Life & Death 1	$24
Life & Death 2	$32
Lightspeed 1	$29
M1 Tank Platoon	$39
Mantis Exprmntl Fghtr	$37
Mechwarrior	$33
Megafortress	$37
Megafortress Mission 2	$24
Miami Enforcer	$39
Mig 29 Fulcrum	$45
New Facilities Locator	$27
Power Boat Simulator	$39
PT 109	$15
Red Baron EGA	$34
Red Baron VGA	$36
Red Storm Rising	$12
Resolution 101	$24

IBM MAC & AMIGA GAMES FOR LESS

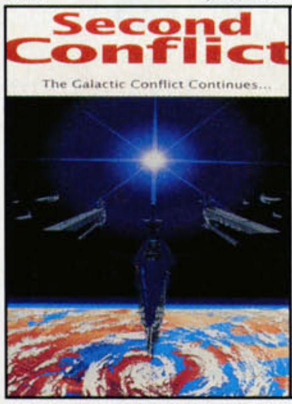
IBM SIMULATION

Rapcon $29
Sailing Instructor $199
Sailing Simulator $39
East Coast Voyages $39
West Coast Voyages $39
Scenery Collection A $37
Scenery Collection B $37



'MAGIC CANDLE 2' from **MINDCRAFT** is an in depth roleplaying game. The sequel surpasses the original. Features a great story, new spells, new magic items, new monsters, new skills, new npcs, old friends, optional auto combat, conversation recorder saves dialogue to disk, printouts, text searches, automatic mapping, split parties, mouse support, 256 color VGA, & sound board support. **$38**

Search for the Titanic $27
Secret Weapons Lftwff $45
S Weapons Expansion 1 $21
S Weapons Expansion 2 $21
Shuttle $37
Silent Service 1 $7
Silent Service 2 $34
Startrek 25th Aniversry $36
Stellar 7 $21
Stormovik $15
Strike Aces $32
Strike Commander $45
Stunt Driver $32
Stunt Track Racer $25
Stunts $31
Sublogic Scenery Disks $22
Tank $33
Team Yankee $36
Team Yankee 2 $32
Test Drive 2 $30
TD2 Callifornia Challng $15
TD2 European Challng $15
TD2 Muscle Cars $15
TD2 Super Cars $15
Test Drive 3 $32
TD3 Road & Car Disk $19
Their Finest Hour $37
TFH & BH1942 $38
Thunder Chopper $24
Thunderhawk $32
Thunderstrike $39
Tracon $34
Tracon 2 $29
Ultrabots $37
Vette $33

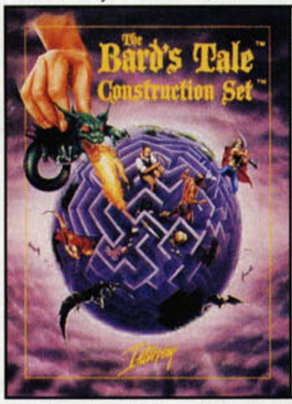


'SECOND CONFLICT' from **JSOFT** is a space strategy game. Control the economy, military, and civilian population. Balance population growth against military recruiting. Allocate resources to produce battleships, planetary defenses, stealth ships, transports and missiles. Multiple human and computer players, point and click **MICROSOFT WINDOWS** interface, and a scenario editor are included. **$34**

Wing Commander 1 $39
WC1 Mission 1 or 2 $19
Wing Commander 2 $47
WC2 Op Module 1 or 2 $27
WC2 Speach Pack $15
Wolfpack $15
Yeager's Air Combat $38
Yeager's AFT 2.0 $19

AMIGA GAMES

688 Attack Sub $34
A10 Tank Killer $33
Action Stations $29
Armada 2525 $32
Armor Geddon $29
ATP $37
Bandit Kings A China $37
Bard's Tale 1 $18
Bard's Tale 2 $19
Bard's Tale 3 $34
Battlehawks 1942 $21
Battle Isle $32
Battle Tank Barbarosa $36
Battletech $34
Birds of Prey $32



'BARD'S TALE CONSTRUCTION SET' form **INTERPLAY** allows you to build your own BARD'S TALE based dungeons. Place monsters, wizards, heroes, villains, or create your own. Place pits, stairwells, teleports, anti magic areas, hidden doors, & illusionary walls. Place treasures, magic swords, armor, potions, scrolls, figurines, rings or create your own. 256 color VGA & sound support. **$34**

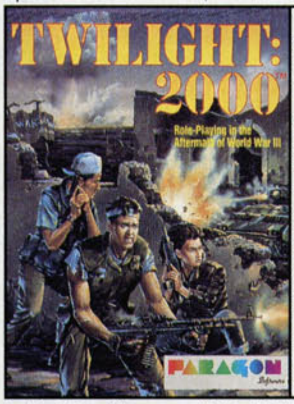
Blue Max:Aces WW I $34
Breach 2 $24
Breach 2 Scenario Disk $15
Buck Rogers $32
Centurion Dfndr Rome $34
Champions of Krynn $32
Code Name:Iceman $24
Cohort $34
Colonel's Bequest $24
Command HQ $39
Conan $32
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Corporation $32
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Genghis Khan $37
Gettysburg:Turn Point $37
Gunship $34
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Harpoon $37
Harpoon Battle Sets $19
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Heart of China $34
Heatwave $28
Hound of Shadow $28
Immortal $34
Imperium $26
Indy Jones Adventure $24
Kampfgruppe $37
King's Quest 1 - 3 Ea $29
King's Quest 4 $34
Leisure Suit Lrry 1-5Ea $34
Lemmings $32
Loom $21
Lost Admiral $34
Lost Patrol $34
M1 Tank Platoon $39
Manhunter NY or SF $29
Megafortress $38
Midwinter $28
Might & Magic 2 $38
Might & Magic 3 $38
Nobunaga's Ambition $37
Nova 9 $21
Nuclear War $34
Overrun $39
Perfect General $34
Planet of Lust $28
Police Quest 1 $29
Police Quest 2 $34
Pool of Radiance $34
Pools of Darkness $38
Populous $34
Populous 2 $38
Powermonger $34
Railroad Tycoon $34
Red Barron $34
Red Storm Rising $30
Riders of Rohan $39
Rise of the Dragon $34
Romanc 3 Kngdm 1or2 $42
Rorke's Drift $34
Rules of Engagement $39
Sci Mutant Priestess $31
Search for the King $37
Second Front $34
Secret of Sllver Blades $38
Sex Vixens from Space $28

AMIGA GAMES

Shadow Sorcerer $32
Shuttle $37
SIMCANADA GAMES $36
SimCity $33
Sleeping Gods Lie $27
Space Quest 1 or 2 $29
Space Quest 3 or 4 $34



'TWILIGHT 2000' from **MICROPROSE** is a roleplaying game set in the aftermath of **WW3**. Test your leadership skills by commanding a squad of 20. Features individual motivations, values & moral code, 50 attributes/skills, 60 careers, overhead 3D outdoor views, detailed 3D military vehicle simulators, masses of vehicles, weapons, & explosives to kill & maim with. 256 color VGA, adlib support. **$34**

Spirit of Excaliber $29
Star Control $34
Starflight 1 $32
Starflight 2 $32
Storm Across Europe $39
Team Yankee $37
Their Finest Hour $21
Thunderhawk $32
To the Rhine $36
Typhoon of Steel $39
Ultima 4 or 5 $39
UMS 2 $39
Vengeance of Excalibur $32
Wizardry Bane Cosmic $39
Worlds at War $29

MACINTOSH

Ancnt Art of War $29
Ancnt Art of War Sea $29
Armor Alley $32
Balance of the Planet $19
Bttl Chess $34
Bttl Chess 2 Chinese $31
Carrier Command $31
Castles $34
Checkmate $36
Citadel $26
Crystal Quest $29
Darwin's Dilemma $32
Design Your Own Train $32
Drgn Lair $38
Drgn Lair 2:Time Warp $38
Drgn Lair Esc Singe Cstl $37
Faces/Tetris 3 $25
Falcon $34
Fast Break $30

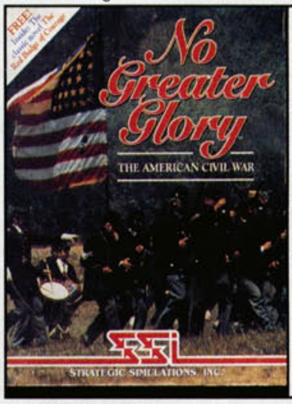


'CONQUESTS OF THE LONGBOW: ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD' is an adventure game that gives a feeling for the legend. Richard is being held for ransom by the Austrians. Your goal is to raise money to pay the ransom. You are aided by your marry band and obstructed by Prince John, the Abbot & the Sheriff. Features multiple paths to multiple endings, 256 color VGA & sound support. **$34**

Go Master 5.0 $36
Grail Quest $19
Harpoon $39
Harpoon Challenge Pak $59
Hoyle's Games 1 $21
Hoyle's Games 2 $21
Ishido $34
Loom $29

MACINTOSH

Mission Starlight $29
Nicklaus Course Disk 3 $15
Nicklaus Course Disk 4 $15
Nicklaus Course Disk 5 $15
Lemmings $29
Lost Treasures Infocom $59
Mean 18 Golf $30
Might & Magic 3 $38
Monopoly $29
Moonbase $24
Mutant Beach $43
Nascar Challenge $32
Oids $25
Operation Combat $29
P51 Mustang $37



'CIVIL WAR: NO GREATER GLORY' from **SSI** is a military, economic, political simulation of the American Civil War. Determine the issues of slavery, taxes, inflation, & negro enlistment. Play either side, Abraham Lincoln & the North or Jefferson Davis & the South. Pick your cabinet members & foreign envoys. Move your armies into position & order your generals to take them to battle. **$42**

Patton Strikes Back $35
Pirates $39
Playmaker Football $32
Railroad Tycoon $39
Reach for the Stars $29
Risk $29
Robo Sport $37
Scrabble Deluxe $29
Secret Silver Blades $38
Shanghaii 2 $32
Shufflepuck Cafe $27
Simant $37
Simcity $29
Simcity Graphics Set 1 $23
Simcity Graphics Set 2 $23
Simcity Terrain Editor $15

MACINTOSH

Simearth $41
Skyshadow $29
Solitaire Royale $15
Space Ace $37
Space Ace 2 $37
Space Quest 3 $34
Space Quest 4 $34
Spaceward Ho $37
Spirit of Excalibur $29
Starglider 2 $29
Strategic Conquest $37
Stratego $31
Swap $29
Tank (with video) $37
Tesserae $32
Tetris $24
Thexder 1 $21
Tom Landry Football $29
Tracon 2 $29
UMS 2 $34
Vengeance of Excalibur $32
Vette $33
V Victory $38
Warlords $29
Welltris $24
Where Europe Carmen $30
Where Time Carmen $30
Where USA Carmen $30
Where World Carmen $27
Wizardry 1 $28
Wizardry 2 $33
Wizardry Bane Csm Frg $37
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Action Game of the Year
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King's Quest V

Role-Playing Game of the Year
Elvira

Simulation Game of the Year
Red Baron

Strategy Game of the Year
Powermonger

Wargames of the Year
Command HQ
Warlords

Special Artistic Achievement Award
Rise of the Dragon



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Kid Pix	34.95	Second Math	32.95
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Math Blaster +	29.95	Spell It +	29.95
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Math Rabbit	25.95	Story Teller II	31.95
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McGee at Fair	24.95	Treasure Mtn	29.95
Memory Lane	26.95	Typing Tutor 5	29.95
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Newsroom	14.95	Write & Publish	39.95
Nigel's World	35.95	Young Math	26.95

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ADD Savg Frontr	29.95	Flt Sim Scnry dsk	19.95	Mixed M.Goose	24.95	Tetris	19.95
ADD Pool Drknes	36.95	Future Wars	29.95	Monopoly	24.95	Their Finst Hour	43.95
ADD Shdw Sorcr	29.95	Galleon of Glory	27.95	Nascar Challng	29.95	Theme Prk Myst	29.95
Action Stations	29.95	Genghis Khan	35.95	NFL ProFootball	44.95	Time Quest	29.95
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ATP Flight Assgn	36.95	Heart of China	35.95	Pick 'n Pile	25.95	Vaxine	19.95
B.A.T.	19.95	Hoverforce	29.95	Pirates/Sw.Sam.	14.95	Veng.Excalibur	29.95
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Back to Future III	26.95	Indy Jones VGA	25.95	Playmaker Ftbl	34.95	W.Gretzky Hocky	33.95
Bane Csmic Frge	39.95	Indy Jones IV	38.95	Police Quest 2	29.95	Warlords	29.95
Bard Tales III	29.95	JNicklaus Golf	34.95	Police Quest 3	34.95	Weaver Basbl II	31.95
Battle Chess vga	30.95	JN Crse disks	14.50	Prince of Persia	25.95	Welltris	23.95
Battle Command	22.95	JBond:Stlth Affr	32.95	Pro Tennis Tr II	31.95	Western Front	37.95
Battle Isle	29.95	Jetfighter II	39.95	Quest for Glory I	35.95	Willie Beamish	34.95
Battlestorm	29.95	Joe Montana Ftb	29.95	Quest for Glory II	35.95	Wing Comder I	38.95
Battletech II	28.95	Jhn Madden Ftb	29.95	Red Baron VGA	35.95	WCI:Sec.Missn I	18.95
Boxing, 4D	31.95	Key to Maramon	14.95	Rengade Legion	29.95	WCI:Sec.Missn 2	18.95
Breach 2	19.95	King's Bounty	19.95	Rise of Dragon	34.95	Wing Comder II	44.95
Bridge,Gr.Slam	21.95	Kings Qst I	29.95	Risk (Windows)	29.95	WCII Speech Ac.	13.95
Cardinal Kremlin	23.95	Kings Qst II	29.95	Rmnc 3 Kngdms	39.95	Wide Wrld Boxg	29.95
Carmen San Diego		Kings Qst III	29.95	Rmnc 3 Kng II	39.95	Wonderland	35.95
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As I wandered

through the city of Spur late one night, I came into a city square where two dragons (Rime and Rhuagh) stood back to back, battling townsmen and guards. On the cobblestones in front of them lay a heavy iron armor, a heavy lead robes, a light iron armor, another heavy iron armor, a two-handed great-axe, a short mace, a light bronze cloak and some silver coins. One of the dragons grinned at me, and bowed.

Meanwhile they continued to fight the guards who kept arriving. And they chatted with each other in the tongue of the dragons. "uv vto dxz bl hwd brkbtvwb srpmmed qi ik fdgt" said Rime. (An odd thing about the world of Dragon's Gate is that all adventurers therein automatically know each other's names. It saves a lot of time on introductions.)

"Hello, Rhuagh," said I.

"Hi, Huemac," answered he.

"Greetings, human," said Rime.

"Need any help?" I asked courteously. It occurred to me that I needed friends in this new city of Spur and these two dragons looked like powerful characters indeed.

"Don't think so," answered Rhuagh.

"Your kind is a rarity in this world, and a pleasant sight to see," said Rime.

"Would you mind if I wandered around with you?" I asked.

"By all means, please do," Rime responded.

"Thanks," said I as I took a closer look at my host. I saw a first-stage, massive-boned, stocky-bodied Dragon with gray eyes and razor-sharp claws. His body was armed in steel plate armor and covered with a silvery glimmer of frost.

"Would you like some armor?" asked Rime. "You look a little chilly."

My flaming torch flickered for a moment. "Yes, I could use anything you feel like sharing." And thus began my friendship with the great dragon Rime. As we stood there and boldly fought the guardsmen of the city, he taught me much about surviving and prospering in the world of Dragon's Gate, the world where death is no more than an inconvenience.

— Huemac the Rune Mage

GEnie's *Dragon's Gate*

Explored by Huemac the Rune Mage (aka Ken St. Andre)



Dragon's Gate is the newest on-line interactive role-playing game available on the **GEnie** network. Gamers who like medieval fantasy (in a world liberally filled with nonhuman characters) will positively love the *Dragon's Gate* experience.

It's something like falling down Alice's rabbit hole. At the bottom, one finds oneself in a strange office facing Max the Magic Dragon. This is the beginning of a "new life" for the player, a life in which one's old body, identity and gender are swept away and the gamer is reborn as one of the twenty different major intelligent races that inhabit the land. One can be fully human, as this writer chose to be, or totally inhuman: a Dragon or an Arachnian (giant spider), Elf (three different varieties), Dwarf, Goblin, Ogre or Muatana-Al (a kind of vampire that feeds on life-force instead of blood); Fighter, Holy Order, Bard, Thief, Barbarian, Forester or Rune Mage — all express one's alter ego through choice of race and occupation. Each being is defined through six major numerical attributes and five minor attributes. These attributes are randomly determined within certain ranges appropriate to the type of creature chosen. In addition, there are dozens of skills to be learned and practiced (including all combat and magic skills), as well as several foreign languages to master — thus assuring players of the fun of watching their characters grow and improve as long as they continue to play.

Like any good fantasy world, *Dragon's Gate* is full of places to explore, monsters to slay, quests to complete and treasure to amass. Furthermore, the world is dynamic, and new realms of adventure can be brought on-line as the need for them arises. It is pretty much a hack-and-slash environment for new players. Virtually every NPC in the game who isn't a shopkeeper or a priest will turn out to be hostile, which means that every time the player stops moving his/her character, *something* or *someone* will attack. However, there are friends to be found! Those friends are the other players who happen to be adventuring in *Dragon's Gate*. Although players may attack each other if they wish to, it makes far more sense to team up against the dangers of the Dragon's Gate world. The very real social interaction among the players is the chief attraction of this game — that and the unparalleled opportunity for extensive role-playing.

There were only three drawbacks to *Dragon's Gate* that this reviewer experienced. The big one is that, like all on-line experiences that use a national database, it will cost money, in this case $6.00 per hour. That seems like a very reasonable price for being transported into a world of alien wonder and adventure. The second disadvantage concerns the game manual, which must be downloaded and printed out by the gamer. While quite extensive, it neglects to explain some very important parts of survival in the world of Dragon's Gate — such things as how to fight or cast magic so that it will actually accomplish something are often explained by other players rather than by manual text. While this lack of basic information does lend to the feeling of exploring an alien society, it also costs time and money in getting familiar with the basics. Lastly, *Dragon's Gate* is a text-only game. The feeling one gets through play is like being in an old-style text-only computer adventure game. There is something to be said for such games. The imaginative pictures conjured into the gamer's mind as play progresses should be much more satisfying than some low-res graphics supplied by a front-end program. However, for those who don't actively use their imaginations, the graphic front end provided for something like *Neverwinter Nights* might be more satisfying. At least the graphics make it easier to visualize where one is and what is going on.

Dragon's Gate is a production of **Adventures Unlimited Software, Inc.** and is available for $6.00 per hour between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. on **GEnie**, page 915. The original concept can be attributed to Mark Jacobs; design and programming by Darrin Hyrup and Mark Jacobs; scenarios by Mark Jacobs and Dave Dickinson.

There is much to tell about the world of **Dragon's Gate** that this adventurer hasn't even hinted at, but time and space are short.

Right now, Rime has disappeared and these weary bones must go in quest of him. Should the gentle reader happen to meet one Huemac the Rune Mage when adventuring in the world of Dragon's Gate*, such a gentleperson is urged to proffer a "Hail and Well-met!" We might well hoist flagons and slay monsters together!* **CGW**



Art by Rodger MacGowan; © RBM Graphics

COMPUTER WARGAMING WORLD

CARRIERS

A Massive Second

by Alan

Sneak Previews are not designed to be reviews. They are feature articles based on "works in progress" which CGW's editors have deemed worthy of early coverage. These articles are not intended to provide the "final word" on a product, since we expect to publish appropriate review coverage when the game is completely finished. Sneak Previews are designed to inform our readers about upcoming games and generate excitement about the "state of the art" of computer game design in general.

"Look, up in the sky. It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's... a *bunch* of planes! Man the guns! This is *not* a drill! Air Raid!"

Welcome back to **Strategic Studies Group**'s game of carrier operations in the Pacific during World War II. That multiple award-winning (now *classic*) wargame of 1984, *Carriers at War* is making a "splashy" comeback on the IBM. For all those people who have kept their Apple IIs and C-64s around just to play this game (and there are many of them), it will soon be time to upgrade.

VGA on the Menu

The first impression made by the new *Carriers at War* is an improved graphic look analogous to the way the Lexington must have appeared at its christening. While almost *any* graphic look would have been an improvement over 1984's standard, the Roger Keating/Ian Trout team at SSG in Australia has gone all out to present top-of-the-line wargame graphics. This might be difficult for experienced *CAW* players to imagine, since the game strictly uses a menu-driven interface, but the truth is that each map has been artistically rendered and the menus given a *Windows*-like look and feel. Above all that, each ship and airplane which appears in the game has been presented as a beautiful graphic ("painted," not digitized), complete with statistics and a mini-history. Some gamers may not care for the overly squat nature of some of the plane diagrams, but they are pretty, nonetheless. Best of all, as ships suffer damage in battle, these large silhouettes graphically depict the destruction. It is now an *emotional* experience to be able to actually *see* one's navy burning away.

Although the beta version previewed for this article did not include all the graphics, those that were present created a plethora of "oohs" and "aahs" around the office. Issuing orders, watching battles and inspecting damage have all been transformed into a visual experience in the new edition of *CAW*. In fact, this game has become one of the easiest "learn by watching" wargames this writer has ever seen. By merely sitting next to someone playing *CAW*, one can quickly pick up which menu does what by observing the use of all of the icon and text "push" buttons displayed on the screen.

What's New in Armament?

The handling of ships and planes has also been enhanced in the new *Carriers at War*. For instance, ships now have both permanent damage and "fire" damage (which can be repaired, but can also spread). Graphic representations of both types of damage appear when a ship is inspected and it is an impres-





sive spectacle to see a carrier with huge holes, boiling fires and massive plumes of smoke emerging from it.

Planes, too, are now tracked individually and in greater detail. Since the program can handle over 2,000 individual airplanes, with each one monitored separately (now a player will know if they are inward- or outward-bound on a search mission, shadowing a contact, lost on takeoff, destroyed by flak, etc.), the information available concerning one's air assets is tremendous. Even the strike waves are now graphically represented.

Bombs Away!

The main air-sea battle routine has, like everything else in the new *CAW*, been graphically enhanced. Furthermore, the designers have not missed an opportunity to enhance their already excellent simulation of air-naval combat. Now, players will see a display to the right of the screen which shows each phase of the battle, complete with fighters and bombers breaking off into groups of one to five planes. Fighters will engage in air-to-air battles (with very specific results reported), while bombers will begin their attack runs.

Naturally, bombers will suffer at the hands of enemy fighters and flak to varying degrees

AT WAR

Strike from SSG

Emrich

destroyers and light cruisers can deploy either in front of or behind the battle line. Formations can be ordered to open or close range and players can direct the fire for individual weapons during each of the five-minute combat rounds. For a game aspect which rarely occurs, surface battles are quite a spectacle and it looks like a lot of new programming and design work went into them.



(being either destroyed, damaged or "harassed" into making attack runs with greatly reduced accuracy). Even though there was no actual animation depicted on-screen in the pre-release version, watching the combat results read across the screen was still exciting enough to cause several shouts of gaming joy and anguish to exude from this writer and all the observers assembled about his monitor. Of course, those who want to play a truly historical game can turn off the battle display and wait to read the (often deliberately) inaccurate reports which simulate the fog of war that their historical counterparts had to deal with.

Even the surface battles have been enhanced. Now, a graphic battleboard is displayed in order to assist players in actually maneuvering ships into one of those rare surface battles. Each side has three rows or "lines" displayed. The central row is the "Battle Line," where one's battleships and cruisers are deployed. Carriers, tankers and transports are placed "behind" the battle line, away from the enemy, while screening vessels like

What You *Don't* See Can Still Hurt You

Of course, carrier warfare still remains very much a game of "hide and seek." Finding one's adversary, and then getting reports which are even remotely accurate, will always be an admiral's problem. While this was already the shining star of the 1984 *Carriers at War*, it has been enhanced in the IBM version. The search routines now automatically determine the correct number of planes to cover the player's selected search patterns, launches and retrieves said planes and then tags sighting reports by their age. The error factor of these reports is also built into the game, so it is up to the player to decide how much validity to lend to each sighting report. One thing this writer did *not* like in the preview copy was how sightings were marked on the map. A blue "X" was "impressed" into the map and was very hard to read. It is hoped that the color will change to something a bit more legible in the production version.

Remember the AI

Even back in 1984, *Carriers at War* was acclaimed not only for its comprehensive treatment of the subject, but also for its well-designed artificial intelligence (AI). Again, more tinkering has been done and improvements have been made, but most of the new AI elements are merely fine-tuning. Basically, the computer must make the same decisions, based on the same level of misinformation about actual enemy locations and damage, as human players have to make. A routine has been built into the program which examines all the computer's sighting reports, judges them and then, assigns any missions deemed appropriate to investigate them further. If further investigations can produce enough proof to warrant a strike mission, off it goes, for better or worse.

This means that an error factor is built into the game and the computer can make mistakes just as deadly (or fortuitous) as a human player can. Like a human opponent, therefore, *CAW*'s AI presents an opponent who is thoughtful, yet is just as prone to the fortunes of war when making command decisions.

Missing from Action

One feature hailed in most **SSG** games is their "design your own" features. These "scenario editor" programs allowed players to get into the game and create their own maps, units and values. So it was with the original *Carriers at War*, but not so in the new, 1991 version. Thus, players who have designed their own scenarios, with stacks of information at the ready, will have to wait a while before "diving" into *Carriers at War*.

Future Promises

All is not lost, however, for *CAW* scenario designers. A scenario editor is promised as a separate product. SSG has opted to make the editor a separate product for three reasons: the additional time it will take to produce it; the additional cost it would add to the game; and the increased intensity involved in scenario design for the new version of *CAW*. This latter point is particularly important, since each ship requires multiple animated explosions to be pictured for each plane and ship type whenever said ship/plane takes damage. Many users will simply not want to expend all that effort. Further, the size of the documentation and disk space involved are also likely to be huge, even without the design kit features. No "paint" program will be included, either. Instead, the scenario editor will accept any standard .LBM graphics file from *Deluxe Paint*, put it into a special template and then compress it.

Another feature which was promised is sound support. While not included to any degree in the beta version previewed, assurances that it will, indeed, be there must be heeded. So far, the remake of *Carriers at War* bears all the markings of a quality product. As for a product release projection... well, SSG has met with pretty clear sailing on this project as of press time. If it continues, this game should pull into port during the first quarter of 1992. On the day this ship comes in, this writer, for one, is going to take a long liberty and play many, many hours of *Carriers at War*. **CGW**



Guns on the Golan

A Replay of Conflict: Middle East

by Michael Peck

Arab player: Michael Peck
Israeli player: Ken Hess

The following is a replay of the 1973 scenario of Conflict: Middle East *(published by* ***Strategic Simulations Inc.****). The article focuses on the first eight turns (four days) of the game's historical scenario, including the initial Arab assaults and the subsequent Israeli counterattack along the Golan Heights.*

Holiday tranquility reigned in Israel on the afternoon of Oct. 6, 1973. It was Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement. But the peace suddenly was shattered by the roar of thousands of guns and hundreds of jets streaking toward Israel. Along the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights, massive Arab armies thrust across the Israeli border. The Arab strategy was simple. They would grab a large chunk of Israeli territory and then force the Israelis to wear themselves out in counterattacks against the weaker, but more numerous, Arab forces. The Israelis intended to use their central position to concentrate their gradually mobilizing forces against Syria and then Egypt.

The Onslaught — Oct. 6 A.M. and P.M.

The Arab offensive began with heavy air attacks on Israeli troops and artillery units to open up the ground campaign. *[Ed: Players who do not attempt to grab air superiority will get the job done on the ground — for a while — but not attaining air superiority is a risky proposition for the Arabs, should a protracted war ensue.]* Arab warplanes inflicted some damage, but lost nearly 100 aircraft to Israeli fighters during this first day of the campaign. The Israelis committed some of their aircraft to attacking surface-to-air missile sites, but reserved the majority for close air support for the coming ground battle.

On the ground, superior command and control enables the Israelis to move after Arab moves were completed, but prior to combat. Also, Israeli units have flexibility in being able to reassign and form ad hoc units from troop detachments. For example, a detachment of the 7th Armored Brigade, the only strong Israeli unit on the Golan, reinforced the crucial observation point of Mount Hermon. The armor helped repulse an assault on the mountain by Syrian paratroopers and a Moroccan infantry brigade. Yet, other Syrian attacks on the undermanned Golan fortifications succeeded in capturing several fortified hexes.

In the south, an interesting Israeli stratagem was to withdraw garrisons along the Suez canal *before* the Arab blows landed. An Israeli armored counterattack along the northern area of the canal ejected an Egyptian commando brigade which had crossed the Suez. A southern counterattack was launched, but less successfully, as it was smothered by Egyptian artillery and anti-tank weapons. An Egyptian airborne brigade, helicoptered into a blocking position in the Sinai mountain passes, was completely wiped out by Israeli armor.

Several newly mobilized Israeli brigades were consolidated into larger formations. *[Ed: This to provide local "hammer blow" counterattacks with which to blunt the Arab spearheads.]* Just as in real life, poor 1973-era avionics grounded the Arab air forces during the night. While this same darkness handicapped the Israeli Air Force as well, its fleet of versatile F-4 Phantoms flew some grueling night missions which blasted Syrian armor. Despite the increase of fatigue due to night combat, the Syrians mopped up most of the remaining Israeli strongpoints on the Golan, but an assault along the southern Golan heights failed after an Israeli parachute brigade was helicoptered into the hex.

During the night, Egyptian commandos unsuccessfully assaulted the remaining Israeli forts along the northern and southern ends of the canal. Egyptian infantry, however, were able to cross three more bridges and link these bridgeheads along the eastern bank of the Suez. Not an auspicious start for the Arabs, but the situation was far from hopeless.

Mop-up — Oct. 7

The morning began with heavy IAF (Israeli Air Force) strikes on Syrian units. Though far

smaller, superior Israeli effectiveness enabled the Israeli Air Force to gain air superiority at small cost. The IAF concentrated on Syrian armor and SAM sites which, in turn, took their toll on the vulnerable A-4 Skyhawks. In the dawn light, Syrian tankers on the Golan Heights gazed down on the Israeli settlements in the clear terrain below. Their observation was enhanced by the occupation of Mount Hermon, which the Israelis had abandoned because of confused orders. (The Israelis accidentally moved the garrison out and could not retract the move — an important limitation in the game's mechanics.) Israeli reserves smashed another Syrian assault along the southern Golan, while Israel continued retreating from the Suez canal, screening the Egyptian infantry and armor which were streaming across it.

Again the ubiquitous Phantoms were the only aircraft seen in the night skies. Concerned that some of their assault brigades had taken 50 percent losses, the Syrians halted their offensive and waited for the Israelis to dig them out. The weak Israeli units in the Sinai continued withdrawing, pursued by hordes of Egyptian troops. Meanwhile, all Israeli reinforcements poured into the Golan and were consolidated, along with the remnants of destroyed Israeli formations there.

Pause — Oct. 8

The day began with sporadic Arab air attacks on the Golan. Israeli Phantoms attacked SAM sites, while the vulnerable Skyhawks pounded Syrian ground targets. Limited reconnaissance capabilities made the rear areas of both sides largely invisible. However, the Israelis did bomb seemingly empty Golan hexes in hopes of finding Syrian artillery and managed to achieve *some* success along the constricted Golan. A ground pause ensued along the Israeli-Syrian border, while the Egyptians continued to ooze forward beyond the range of their protective SAM umbrella along the canal.

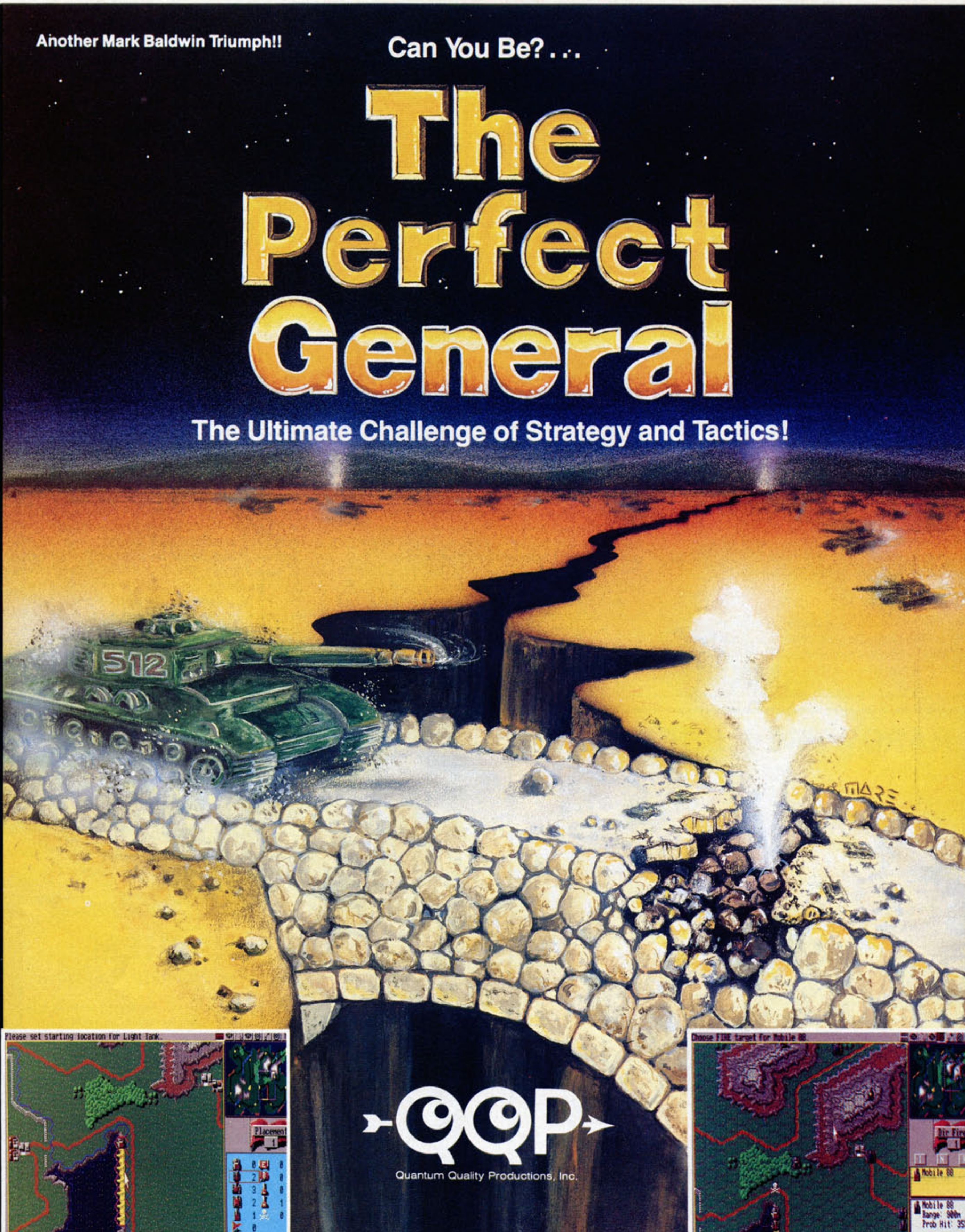
Counterattack — Oct. 9

The morning passed quietly except for the customary air activity. That night, however, the Israeli counteroffensive began with a massive attack by four heavily reinforced brigades poised along the southern Golan. Syrian artillery and anti-tank weapons caused some losses, especially among the antiquated M-3 halftracks, but the defenders were being destroyed or dislodged handily. Though bolstered by the arrival of an Iraqi armored division, the Arab weaknesses were becoming painfully clear to the Syrians. The Arab units, usually about 80 percent weaker than their Israeli counterparts, could not consolidate. The attritional nature of combat resulted in hordes of depleted Arab units, who could only stack two per hex, a key design element in the game simulating differences in doctrine. This left the Arabs vulnerable to being systematically destroyed. The massive Syrian artillery only managed to inflict moderate damage and was itself being attrited by Israeli counterbattery fire and IAF air strikes.

Despite their success, the Israelis had still suffered some losses during their Golan counteroffensive. Most of the Israeli reinforcements had been mobilized and neither side could expect more than scanty arms shipments from the superpowers. Intending to preserve their powerful but fragile spearheads, the Israelis rejected a 1967-style blitzkrieg in favor of systematically clearing the Golan. An interesting plan, *if* the Egyptians didn't press too far....

Payback — Oct. 10 to Oct. 17

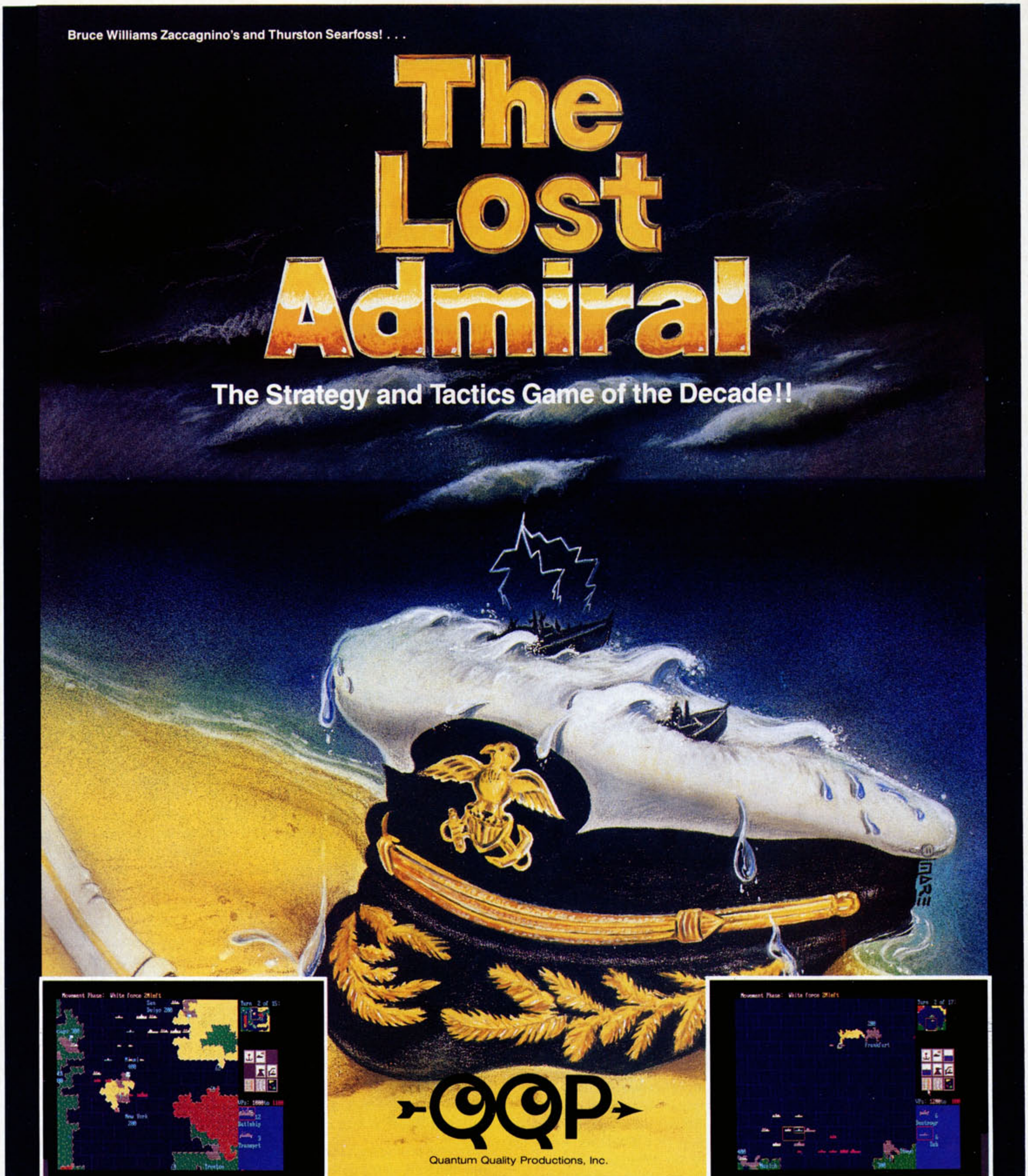
The Israelis advanced further into Syria and ground up most of the remainder of the Syrian army. The Israelis chose to bottle up the surviving Syrians around Damascus and, by Oct. 14, had begun transferring artillery to the now long-neglected Sinai front. The Israeli successes precluded Jordanian intervention except for the introduction of a handful of warplanes. Also on Oct. 14, the Israelis began punching through the Egyptians on the northern Sinai road, supported by devastating IAF air strikes. By Oct. 17, the Israelis were within 20 kilometers of the canal, facing only a depleted Egyptian army. The Arabs finally agreed to a cease-fire, and UN-sponsored disengagement talks began. The cost had been horrific. The Arabs had lost 60 percent of their tanks, 80 percent of their artillery, 30 percent of their aircraft and 90 percent of their SAMs. The Israelis had also lost 60 percent of their tanks, 75 percent of their artillery and half their warplanes. It had been a dearly bought victory. **CGW**



This game is based on a twelve year old tournament series and includes a highly refined yet simple playing system.

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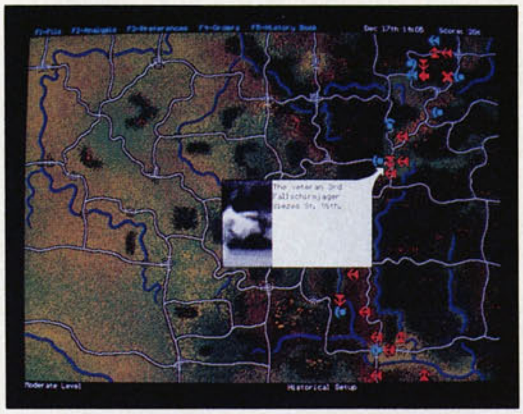
"The Lost Admiral" computer game is IBM PC compatible. It can be obtained through your favorite retailer or ordered direct by calling: 1-908-788-2799.

Crawford Kicks Butt

Broderbund's Patton Strikes Back

by Alan Emrich





TITLE:	Patton Strikes Back
SYSTEM:	IBM, Macintosh
REVIEWED ON:	IBM
PRICE:	$59.95
PROTECTION:	Document Look-Up
DESIGNER:	Chris Crawford
PUBLISHER:	Broderbund San Rafael, CA

"Listen my children
And you shall hear
Of the midnight ride
Of a Panzergrenadier."

In *Patton Strikes Back*, prolific designer Chris Crawford (who has solid wargame credits dating back to the days of mainframes) presents history as it was meant to be: *entertaining*. While we can easily imagine *Laugh-In*'s German soldier Arte Johnson describing this game as "veeeeeery interesting," we know that there is no reason for the prime-time personality to finish that famous punchline. It is *not* stupid (to finish the line for our younger readers). On the contrary, *Patton Strikes Back* is a strategy game that is not only full of sound and fury, but actually signifies something important.

Perhaps, it is best expressed by noting that it is not often this reviewer's six-year old son actually enjoys watching daddy play those boring old wargames on the computer. Now, he's giving valid tactical advice to daddy! Truly, *Patton Strikes Back*'s design team have hit the mark with *one* little wargaming recruit (now nicknamed "Junior General James" thanks to playing this game).

Everything Old Is New Again

The "Battle of the Bulge" was the German offensive through Belgium in December of 1944. The tired American army was dispersed and resting in the snow when the Germans unleashed a massive surprise assault, using many of their elite divisions. As the Germans poured through the breach in the Allied lines on their race to the Meuse river, a counterattack was organized. Brilliant execution of command and control by General George S. Patton, Jr. brought relief to the besieged American 101st Airborne division, who had been trapped for days at the crucial road junction of Bastogne. The rest, as players will find out, is history.

Patton Strikes Back (originally, and perhaps more accurately, entitled *Patton Kicks Butt!*) is a brigade- and division-level wargame of the Battle of the Bulge. For solitaire play only as either side, the game is played in real time (which can be altered from arcade-fast to strategy slow and is "paused" every time a unit is selected and pondered over). Alternately, a player may just elect to observe a battle fought by the computer as both sides. Jaded wargamers who have been playing paper wargames for years, however, have seen scores of "Bulge" games come and go. So what makes *Patton Strikes Back* something new?

Patton on the Glitz

Patton Strikes Back offers players an attractive map of the Ardennes forest (which is remarkably uncluttered, considering the nature of the terrain there). Players can envision the "square" grid upon which the pieces maneuver (except, perhaps, along certain twists in the roads). Units move and attack only in the four main compass directions, never diagonally. To simplify matters of maneuver for new wargamers, the military units are not presented in the standard wargame symbology (rectangular boxes with crosses, ovals and dots in them, as seen in the *Computer Wargaming World* Table of Contents). Instead, each unit is shown as one of four symbols:

For defense, there is a large, placid-looking dot with a single parenthesis along one side facing a given compass point, indicating the direction the defending unit is "facing" (i.e., best prepared to defend).

For attack, there is a thick, stocky arrow. Slow to move, it points in the direction of the attack's thrust.

For maneuvering, there is a a thin, elegant double arrow. Fast and sleek, it also points in the direction the unit is maneuvering toward.

For routed units, an "X" symbol appears to indicated their shattered status. Without any facing, these units move automatically to the player's rear areas and are highly vulnerable if attacked.

The combination of these unit icons in play and the single "gestalt intake" map (which need never be "zoomed" to pick up game details, as so many other wargames require) creates a

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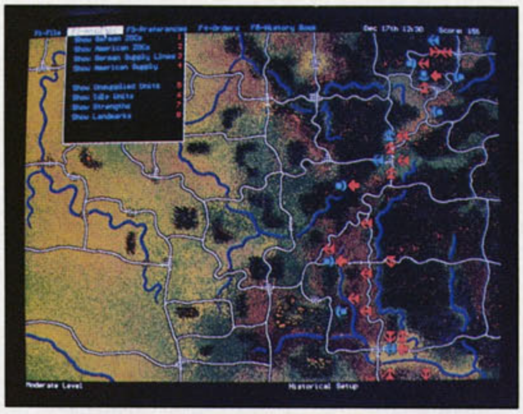


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play environment that is simplicity itself. An important principle of war is simplicity, and *Patton Strikes Back* has kept it *simple*.

When You're Odd, the Odds Are With You

Granted, each unit, when selected, presents such mundane wargaming information on the screen as the unit's strength, fatigue and supply status, but for the beginner who'll just enjoy "pushing the pieces around," the accountancy of wargaming can wait a while. Combat really *does* take all these matters into account, however, and those who would like to actually *win* this game (particularly at the higher of the five difficulty levels) will have to learn how to evaluate those numbers. Pull down menus or hot keys can be selected in order to visualize each unit's "zones of control," supply status, supply lines and order status. All of these elements function in such a clear, simple and logical way that it seems unnecessary to comment further.



As units "bump" into each other, the arrows on-screen animate a bit to show the clash of units. Immediately afterward, a report of the battle will pop up, with a comment like "Von Schmendrick's elite 10th Panzer unit has crushed the green troops of Smith's 61st Infantry regiment." Following that, units might have their orders rescinded or changed by the computer, pending the battle results. The worst fate of all, of course, is seeing one's units "x"ed into a shattered state, where only time and rest *might* afford their recovery.

Finally, for the new players especially, there is a selection on the menu called "Tactical Advice." When selected, the German player will see Chris Crawford, in uniform and bearing a delicious attitude of German aristocratic arrogance, as he offers sound advice such as "pull these troops out" or "seize that bridge." An equally humorous, cigar-chomping, coffee-drinking American lout of a General will offer similar advice for Allied players. The tactical advice is very sound and repeated requests for advice do not give duplicate answers.

You Are There

Every wargame tries to capture some type of "you are there" experience, such as the plain-speaking, yet detailed, battle reports mentioned above. To help the player achieve true "suspended disbelief" and truly feel in command of this wargame, one need only listen. Listening, in fact, is what has drawn a crowd around the old family computer while playing *Patton Strikes Back*. The audio portion of the game has a perfect soundtrack of bullets flying, bombs dropping, tanks squeaking along, the thunder of marching infantry, the bugle call of "reveille" to begin each game day and so much more. It is the equivalent of a Hollywood soundtrack for a good war film. Everything about the sound and opening music to the game has been designed to hit players *emotionally* enough to communicate the feel of war.

Newsreels

Adding to the "you are there" element are little "mini-movies" which occur during play. As units engage in battle or conquer key objectives, not only do the sounds of battle and maneuver fill the air, but "newsreel" footage of the event also plays for a few delightful seconds on one's monitor. Like the combat unit icons, they add a friendliness and familiarity to the game that embraces the wargaming novice in a manner not seen by this reviewer in his 20 years as a wargamer. Seeing these little "reward" movies on a computer screen makes *Patton Strikes Back* actually *compelling* to play.

Just Add History

So far, *real* wargamers ("grognards") are probably peering down their noses as they read this review. A game so full of "fluff," no matter how well done, cannot be for the hard-core historical simulation enthusiast. Wrong!

As certain moments pass during the course of play, the "instant history lesson" pops up with a dreamlike musical fanfare. The whole screen is filled with a history lesson which is actually applicable to one's experiences on the gaming battlefield. After reading the specific historical anecdote, the player can hit the "Tell me more" button and get a second page from a more general, military strategy perspective. Well-written by the historiphiles who created this game, this *Three Penny Opera* approach (feeding the players an enjoyable gaming experience before "preaching" the history to them) is brilliant. Admittedly, not everyone will want to get into the historical aspects of the game, but like the sound and mini-movies, this instant history lessons can be toggled off. (Additionally, the lessons can be called up at will from a pull-down menu.)

Hickory Dickory Docs

About the only place where this reviewer minded that the game "went a bit off the paper" was, ironically, on paper. The documentation is certainly concise and accurate. No, that wasn't the problem. The classroom, conversational style of the rules was a tad distracting. Passages like "Don't get surrounded, and if a big mean Panzer division approaches, turn tail and run" and "'Squares?' you say. 'What squares?' Oops — I forgot to mention the map is divided into invisible squares, just like a chessboard" are certainly personable, but not everyone will be comfortable with such casual banter in a game's documentation.

The Fortunes of War(gaming)

This reviewer must certainly tip his hat to *Patton Strikes Back*. **Broderbund** took a courageous publishing risk on this introductory war/strategy game, no doubt because Chris Crawford believed so in the idea and sold them on it. Wargame sales will pale next to their *Carmen Sandiego* and *Print Shop* titles, but any good game, done right, will be a hit, even if only in a niche market.

The design team had a definitive idea in mind for what it would take to create *exactly* the type of game they wanted: easy enough for beginners, fast enough to keep the excitement level high and rich enough in historical detail to actually *teach* some enjoyable lessons. For every design goal, they clearly hit a bull's eye. When a professional critic like this reviewer can't find *some* chink in a game's armor, the design and development work must have been thoroughly executed. Now, it's all up to the consumers, voting with their wallets, to determine if *Patton Strikes Back* sells as well as it was made. **CGW**

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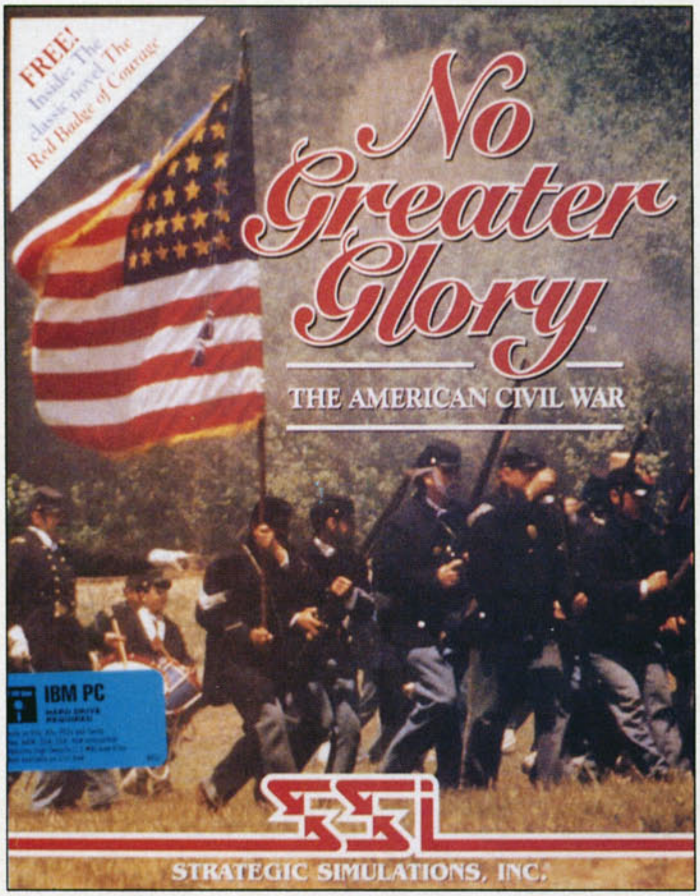
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Conscription, Cornfields and Confederates

Strategic Simulations, Inc.'s No Greater Glory

by M. Evan Brooks



TITLE:	No Greater Glory
SYSTEM:	IBM
PROTECTION:	Document Look-Up
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Dr. Ed Bever
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Simulations, Inc. Sunnyvale, CA

If the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, as Wellington alleged, what can one say about the American Civil War, in which the leaders of both armies were trained in the same institutions? Was the ACW *won* in the factories of the North or nearly *lost* in the legislative chambers of Capitol Hill? The answers to such questions can be explored in **Strategic Simulations, Inc.**'s *No Greater Glory* (hereinafter referred to as *NGG*). An obvious descendant of designer Ed Bever's *Revolution '76* (**Britannica Software**), *NGG* allows the player, as leader of either the North or South, to simulate the American Civil War on a strategic level. It also allows players to discover political and economic parameters, as well as control more military facets than was possible in *Revolution '76*.

Dispatches from the Commander (Documentation)

The documentation is complete, although one must read it carefully. *NGG* can be played with a cursory glance at the rules, although to play well, one must read thoroughly and carefully consider what has been said. For example, when assigning commanders to the field armies, they should be assigned in order of prestige. While the documentation clearly states this, it is all too easy to assign them in order of identity ranking — an error that will needlessly irritate both generals and geographical areas of the nation.

The historical background provided in the manual is excellent. Comprised of a reprint from *Strategy & Tactics* and a separate article from designer Ed Bever, it succinctly explains the problems facing each side in the Civil War and how they attempted to resolve such issues. An excellent historical bibliography is included as well as a copy of Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*. This reviewer must admit that he has not read the book since high school, and even then, most unwillingly. However, it is probably the best novel ever written about an individual soldier in war, and should be required re-reading for anyone with an interest in conflict simulations. Think of it as Keegan's *Face of Battle* in a fictional mode.

Maps to Victory (Graphics and Sound)

The graphics are adequate. National and regional maps are recognizable, although this reviewer found the lettering on such maps to be hard on the eyes. (Please note that the spelling of "Pittsburg" is not an error; it reflects a nineteenth-century variant.) One can adjust to the legibility level, however. What is more difficult to grow accustomed to is the switching from national to regional maps. Since one must assign certain generals to the larger armies (top five for Union; top three for Confederate), it would be nice to have a single screen showing the size of one's armies. Instead, one must continuously switch from national to regional maps and back again. In order to alleviate the problem, this reviewer recommends maintaining a written list of the larger formations and their locations. While such information can be derived from the program, it is not readily available.

Railroad movement (a critical element of the game) is across territories. The rail markers bisect such territories and do not go from point to point. This has been done to clean up the map and not show a redundant clutter. In examining the map, however, one must study it carefully. This reviewer could not understand how McClellan's famous "jaunt down the James" (the invasion of Richmond from the east in 1862) could occur. Dr. Bever explained that the "Northern Virginia" area extends south as far as the James and, hence, McClellan's historical flanking maneuver has been simplified to an attack from Northern Virginia to Richmond.

One must understand that the areas, named after cities, do not reflect the cities themselves, but also encompass the surrounding area. Thus, an area like "Philadelphia" is more accurately "Eastern Pennsylvania." In fact, the designer considered the more general label, but concluded that individual city names offered a better flavor of the Civil War.

Since sound is limited to the internal speaker and does not add anything to the aural experience of the game, this reviewer recommends that players immediately switch to the menu and turn off the sound just as soon as the game loads. Otherwise, one will be compelled to listen to at least four renditions of "Dixie" as the Southern States secede from the Union. More importantly, turning off the music allows combat to be resolved much faster.

Flanking Maneuvers (Game Mechanics)

NGG is mouse-driven and provides a multitude of menus to be accessed during the game-turn. This reflects the fact that each year is divided into three periods (i.e. game turns) and one must make a multitude of decisions during each period/turn: civil affairs (decide

(Continued on page 115)

"No Greater" Advice

Strategic and Tactical Advice on SSI's No Greater Glory

by Tom E. Hughes, Jr.

Players of **SSI**'s new strategic level American Civil War game *No Greater Glory* have a tremendous challenge in trying to balance the political, economic and military elements of the game. This article should help players learn how the computer opponent thinks and enable the "human" presidents to be able to campaign on a level battlefield.

Handicapping the War

When a player selects a difficulty level, only two areas are actually affected: battles and diplomacy. The rest, as they say, is history (historical?).

Playing Politics

To balance the Confederate Cabinet, a player must, of necessity, use Bell, Breckinridge, Mason and Hunter as part of the eight total assignments (including foreign ambassadors). For the Union player, one should use Blair and Johnson (Border State moderates) to balance out Wells and Adams (New England radicals). To better visualize the potential balance or imbalance created by one's selection of a potential cabinet officer's geography, abilities, loyalty and political affiliation, see the "Political Appointees" table accompanying this article. Keep in mind that a cabinet *must* be balanced at the end of the *both* the Cabinet Phase (the first five appointments) and the Diplomacy Phase (the last three appointments).

Keeping up with the Ratings

When troops of differing morale and experience levels combine, the new ratings of the combined force can be determined by consulting the "Experience/Morale Combination" tables. Basically, the values are averaged together. On an IBM computer, however, fractions are never retained in these "integer divides." This means that lower numbers from "averaging" will prevail. Consequently, when even *one* unit of a lower value is added to a force, the cumulative value will drop by, at least, one point.

For example, a force of 50,000 men with an experience of "7" and a morale of "7" is combined with a force of 2,000 men with an experience of "0" and a morale of "6." The resultant force will be 52,000 men with an experience of "6" and a morale of "6."

Therefore, to keep a high valued force's values as high as possible, even when they must be combined with lower valued forces, it is wise to combine all of the lower value reinforcements first into a single group, before joining them with the higher valued force. In this way, the higher valued force will only experience the "truncation" on one occasion, rather than several times.

For those interested in knowing *exactly* how many units can or must be combined to minimize value lowering and maximize value raising, the two Experience/Morale Combination Tables will give the formulae.

Experience/Morale Combination Table

When Troops with a lower rating are added to a force, the maximum that can be added to minimize the drop is:

Levels Dropped	Value Difference -1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7
1	*	x	x/2	x/3	x/4	x/5	x/6
2	-	*	2x	x	2x/3	x/2	2x/5
3	-	-	*	3x	3x/2	x	3x/4
4	-	-	-	*	4x	2x	4x/3
5	-	-	-	-	*	5x	5x/2
6	-	-	-	-	-	*	6x
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	*

When Troops with a higher rating are added to a force, the minimum that must be added to maximize the increase:

Levels Gained	Value Difference +1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7
1	-	x	x/2	x/3	x/4	x/5	x/6
2	-	-	2x	x	2x/3	x/2	2x/5
3	-	-	-	3x	3x/2	x	3x/4
4	-	-	-	-	4x	2x	4x/3
5	-	-	-	-	-	5x	5x/2
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	6x
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

** = an infinite amount*
x = the number of the original troops being added to

Example: A force of 36,000 men an experience level of 6 is combined with:
A force of new recruits with an experience level of 1. By using the "-5" column of the "Levels Dropped" table, one can see how many troops can be added before another level drops. A drop of only one level (to a 5) means adding in no more than x/4 (1/4 of the original 36,000 troops), or 9,000 troops. Adding in upwards of 2x/3 (2/3 of the original 36,000 troops), or 24,000 men, means dropping by two levels (to a 4). Adding in upwards of 3x/2 (1.5 times the original 36,000 troops, or 54,000 men, will leave a combined force with an experience level of 3, and so forth.

Judging Character

When playing a scenario using random leader ratings, the computer receives some added advantages. First of all, the computer player is not restricted by prestige levels when playing with random leader ratings (the

Union Political Appointees Chart

Names in shaded areas are Radical; names in unshaded areas are Moderate.

3Chase^7 3Wade^4	0Stanton^9	3Wells^7 3Adams^6 0Sumner^5
6Washburn^3	3Steward^8 3Cameron^2	
	6Blair^6 6Johnson^5 3Crittenden^4	

Confederate Political Appointees Chart

Names in shaded areas are Radical; names in unshaded areas are Moderate.

	9Mason^6 9Hunter^4
3Bell^4 6Breckinridge^3	
9Benjamin^9 9Walker^5 9Yancy^5	9Rhett^2
3Slidel^8	9Mallory^7 6Memminger^7 6Toombs^6

human player is still hamstrung by dealing with leader's prestige, however). The other computer advantage is that it *knows* "who's who" on its own side, and *always* picks its best leaders without the need for the trial and error human players will require to make that same determination.

During the Cabinet Phase, it should be known that loyalty primarily effects a congressional petition being passed by that cabinet member. Otherwise, leader loyalty is not particularly important.

Economics 101

During the Finance Phase, the "Inflation Index" is calculated along fairly simple lines. The Inflation Index equals the gross spending of that side over the course of the entire game to date, divided by the total income received during the entire game to date. This gives the actual Inflation Index. The detrimental effects of inflation are actually only equal to the square root of the Inflation Index, so don't panic as it starts to move up.

They Eat Horses, Don't They?

When there aren't enough supplies in an area to feed all of the troops there, bad things are sure to happen. Generally, unsupplied troops can locally requisition supplies (i.e., "live off the land") in an amount equal to 2,000 troops per unused factory in that area (for a fee, of course). Any more unsupplied troops beyond this amount causes destruction of the factories in that area at the rate of one factory per 10,000 troops still unsupplied. However, it is not as dark as that may sound. Over time, up to half of the factories destroyed in an area will come back on line.

Sound the Charge!

Trying to get a leader to move his troops into battle can be a real challenge. Here is how they stomach marching into battle:

A leader will march into battle if the leader's initiative rating plus a random number between zero and seven is greater than or equal to ten minus the army's experience level. For an army with an experience level of "3" commanded by a leader with an initiative rating of "4," that force will have slightly better than a 50% chance of marching into battle (it all depends on the random number).

Terrible Swift Swords

When troops clash in battle, use the Combat Formula Chart to understand the results.

"Number of Troops" is equal to the number of troops, plus the number of riverines, plus the number of coastal fortifications (they all "weigh" equally in the battle equation).

"Modifiers" equals Troop Experience, plus Morale, plus General's Ability, plus the Combat Mode adopted during the battle, plus a random number between "0-3."

"Combat Mode," for this formula, equals the Combat Mode plus "4," plus or minus two times the handicap level (which ranges from "-2" to "+2" depending on the play balance level selected at the beginning of the game), plus the modifier if that side is the Tactical Attacker or Defender (this is determined by the computer based on who controls the area being contested, the size of the opposing armies and the initiative of the opposing leaders — unless one is defending the capitol building, in which case that player is always the Tactical Defender).

After comparing each side's "Combat Power," the computer determines the winner and applies the casualties. There are many casualty modifiers to keep in mind. For instance, the South, generally, will have greater casualties than the North. The attacker's casualties will usually be greater than the defender's. Additionally, losses for defeated force are generally greater than those for the victorious side and a higher initiative value for a given general will also translate into higher casualties for both sides (the "Grant" factor). Naturally, the more aggressive the orders (conquest as opposed to raid, for instance), the higher the casualties which can be expected. A higher morale rating will also translate into higher casualties, while a higher experience factor will translate into *lower* casualties for the veteran troops. Finally, as time goes on and the troops are presumed to get better trained, casualties also become higher.

By the way, leader ratings are not necessarily the same as they appear in the documentation. "Don't believe everything you read," suggests Ed Bever. Player's preconceived ideas (particularly from reading the rules) should be kept subject to modification by actual playing experiences.

European Arm Twisting

Players should put the better of their ambassadors in England, rather than France. France tends to follow England's lead. In order to succeed in getting these European powers to do what one wants, bear in mind that the success formula is a relationship between means and goals versus a player's military outlook. The computer checks what a player already *has* compared to what that player is *asking for*, in terms of European involvement. The level of change requested, the player's relative slave policies and the means used to obtain the goal create the result. As a rule of thumb, the Europeans want freed slaves and only gradual changes in their status. Strong players can get away with threatening the European powers, while weaker players should stick to bribing and enticing them. **CGW**

Combat Formula Chart

Combat Power = Number of Troops times Modifiers

Conscription, Cornfields and Confederates

(Continued from page 112)

the political attitudes toward regions), capital relocation, slavery policy, cabinet (and diplomatic) appointments, financial priorities and troop mobilization, as well as determining strategic and campaign movement for the troops so activated.



The menus are easily understandable and the game flows in a logical manner. Virtually every action mandates a player response, and often, one might wish for a faster-playing simulation. However, designer Ed Bever has explained that he intentionally wanted such "stops" in order to allow the gamer to carefully peruse what is happening and not miss a report due to an outside disturbance (e.g. telephone, doorbell, etc.). This aspect of design philosophy is an individual preference and gamers will understand its ramifications as they play.

Four save positions are allowed. These are simply noted as "Save 1" through "Save 4." One must remember what game was saved where. This reviewer would have preferred to be able to name and delete his own save positions, thereby naming them for easy reference (e.g. "C62M" — Confederate, Mid-1862). However, this would have required additional programming routines and the omission is not critical, especially given that *Revolution '76* only allowed a single save position.

To War (Game Play)

Game play is the most important criterion for a successful simulation. How well does *NGG* play? The game *does* simulate the problems which historically faced each side. The Confederates must deter the Union early or the situation will rapidly deteriorate. The Union must survive with as little damage as possible in order to deter foreign intervention and gear up for a juggernaut invasion of the South. Accurately mirroring the reality, the North can make a number of errors and still win, while the South must be virtually perfect. In addition, elections can make or break the player. The North must show some success by the Presidential elections of 1864 to survive.

Poor Kentucky: Kentucky will usually be neutral. With its neutrality recognized by both sides, it has a tendency to secede by mid-1862. However, Kentucky's neutrality is rarely observed by either side. When playing the Confederacy, the seizure of Paducah will offer a knife thrust at the throat of the Union Midwest. Thus, the computer Union rarely waits for this to occur and will invade on the second game turn. If the Paducah invasion is successful, it will be followed up by a seizure of Louisville, thereby bringing Kentucky back into the Union by force of arms. Similarly, the computer South will often invade Paducah simply for its territorial advantages. Thus, one should not be too respectful of territorial integrity.

Washington, DC: If the Union loses its capital, foreign recognition of the Confederacy is a certainty. At *all* costs, the Union must retain Washington, D.C. This may well cause a delay in offensive planning, but it is well worth it. As the Union, the player will discover that a computer Confederate force can seize the capital when attacking at almost 1-2 odds. It is vital to insure the safety of the capital before embarking on military adventures.

Does the Computer Cheat? This reviewer is still unsure as to the "integrity" of the artificial intelligence. While playing the Confederates, he noted successful Union naval invasions of Pensacola and Jacksonville; while playing the Union, the same invasions would often fail because the computer Confederate would reinforce the city that had been chosen as an invasion site.

Sadly, the game does not offer a computer-versus-computer matchup as a learning tool. Dr. Bever told this reviewer that such an option would have required extensive programming, given the number of player-input decisions. Nevertheless, the ability to observe how the computer reacts as either side can give the player a realistic concept of appropriate strategies.

AI Moves: No matter which side one selects, the artificial intelligence can be used to assist in movement of troops and supplies during the strategic phase. This reviewer recommends against allowing the computer to move supplies and troops; it is too easy for it to position troops in an unacceptable location. Just remember to move supplies by river whenever possible.

The Generals: Maintain a paper listing of commander locations as well as force sizes. Only experience will show one how much initiative a general has (especially when using the "random" option) and it is frustrating to lose both prestige and backing simply because one inadvertently assigned a general to the wrong command. It is essential to remember that the generals are listed in a numerical order, which has nothing to do with their prestige. Make sure that you issue orders by prestige and *not* identity.

Naval Forces: The Union should build at least twenty to thirty naval transports early in the War. This will allow an opportunity for invasion of Southern port cities and force the computer Confederate to maintain a garrison or mobile reaction force in the rear. A bolder Rebel may consider ignoring these "pinpricks" and allowing the garrisons and sympathizers to (hopefully) take care of them.

Garrisons: The Confederacy will find Grafton and Charleston, West Virginia difficult to retain. On the other hand, their loss is not crucial. The Union, however, must retain its rear. Moving all forces to the front is a critical error in that anti-war forces can often spring up and become a thorn. If New York is unoccupied, for example, draft riots can actually allow New York to become a Confederate bastion. While it is unrealistic to see a Confederate general leading the rebellious forces in the North, it does reflect the Copperhead mentality so often present. As long as a minimum garrison is present, this potential will be obviated.

Economics and Foreign Recognition: Generally, the Confederacy will achieve covert aid from foreign sources. However, it should not be overbearing — enticements will suffice. Recognition will only come with major successes — seizure of Washington will usually generate foreign recognition. The Confederacy will find that deficit financing is a way of life. While such financing will damage the extent of one's victory, it is important to remember that a debt-ridden victory is better than subjugation.

Paths of Retreat: Remember to assure a retreat route. If assaulting Washington from Northern Virginia, the Confederate will often find that his rear has been cut. If Northern Virginia is seized by the Union, the largest Confederate field army will promptly lay down its arms since it has no friendly adjacent territory. Often, one must seize the opportunity; just be aware that opportunities can flow in two directions.

Road to Appomattox (Conclusions)

No Greater Glory does reflect the major parameters facing each side in the Civil War. However, one must remember that the military is only a single facet and that the political decision-making can often have a larger impact. Akin to *Revolution '76*, *No Greater Glory* may have attempted too much in too small a game engine.

The Confederacy must move quickly and successfully, while the Union must mobilize its economy and population in order to assure success. Overall, *NGG* is a challenging simulation, but one that will require much effort by the gamer in order to achieve victory by either side. This reviewer still finds the game to be a significant challenge. **cgw**

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Lost in Love

Dave Arneson's Tactics For *The Lost Admiral*

In its first ratings period, *The Lost Admiral* jumped into the top twenty of *The CGW Poll.* There is tremendous excitement about this game and this reviewer has not been able to quit playing the game, even after the review was done. So, here (to borrow a cliche from a rather conservative radio personality) is the rest of the story.

Be Prepared

The first fateful decision a player must make is in the composition of the starting fleet. This author has tried extremes like solid U-Boat fleets and Dreadnought armadas. While the subs did better than the big ships, neither proved really successful. Instead, a fleet needs balance. Even then, one must think through every move and have the right ships to support the player's plans.

Crossing the "T"

Attempting to concentrate superior forces at decisive places and times makes the opening move and set up *very* important. Failure to do so will result in a meat grinder of an attrition duel that the computer AI is better suited for than most human players are.

This author prefers the "all the eggs in one basket" approach. Even this approach, however, will require more than a little planning. One cannot start a huge fleet at the end of a long channel since it takes forever to egress.

Make sure that a 200-point building port can be secured (emphasis on *secure*). The next consideration is having access to as many cities as possible when placing initial fleets. It seems tempting to start in the middle of everything, but this can be deceptive. Having too many cities close by means that the nasty old enemy will probably be close by, as well. This situation will hamper proper deployment of the fleet. Fortunately, this only happens during the "random map" games.

Jutland Uber Midway

One strategy is, naturally, to wear the enemy down and win a battle of attrition. This is fine, provided one has the sea room in which to maneuver. With only two ships per space, the sea fills up *very* quickly. The majority of the AI levels play pretty aggressively. However, don't count on the computer making Banzai attacks all the time.

As a tactical play hint, when a ship is hit and the little flashes and explosions linger a bit, this means that one or more enemy carriers are lurking about. The longer the explosions the more carriers there are.

Defending rear area ports is tough. Destroyers *generally* seem to work out the best as garrisons. For base ports, park a battleship or cruiser there *with* a destroyer and a submarine and/or PT boat. Optionally, these forces can operate near the port, but some of them need to be anchored there at all times. Lose those builds and the attrition will quickly wear down one's hopes.

Man the Pumps!

To repair or not to repair, *that* is the question. Weeeelll... it depends on where your repair base is in relation to where the fighting is (i.e., is the base close enough?), how much time is left (there is no point fixing a vessel only to see it end the game sitting at anchor), and what the



enemy has out there. A ship that is sunk is lost forever and, in a campaign, that loss will affect the size of the Flagships in the next phase. Ships are hard enough to replace, so try to conserve them. The AI does not, apparently, go in for repairing ships much and will *usually* fight on until sunk. If there is a friendly base close by, repair your ship by all means.

Flagships

In campaign situations, a number of single scenarios are strung together. Players will gain more points toward promotion in a campaign but the promotions will not come until the sequence has been completed. The big difference in campaign games is the presence of Flagships. These little gems are carriers *with a difference.* They are slightly larger (although still likely to be sunk if attacked too often) but they each will have a special ability. These range from being able to repair other vessels while at sea to "seeing" five squares away rather than the usual two. In all, there are five special kinds of carrier/flagships.

In a campaign game, the surviving Flagships will gain more hit points for the next scenario based on how many enemy ships sank in the last one. This means that Flagships will have hit points in the 30s (3 times the hit points a battleship has, for instance) which allows them to go in "on their own." This is a big change from the regular carriers that must be protected from almost everything. Needless to say, this also makes flagships a prime target for attracting the enemy's attacks (no wonder they call them "bomb magnets"). Flagships add a new element for tactics and strategy, further enriching this already enjoyable strategy game.

Strategy Tips

The reader is advised to take all this with a grain of saltwater, but here are a few tips by scenario.

Map #1 Scenarios: The enemy rarely uses the western passage. Place a few fast ships here and make an end run into his rear areas of Salt Lake and Los Angeles, etc. The bad part is that this maneuver takes a *long* time. PT boats are best to cover the distance efficiently, but send at least two.

Capture or occupy Pueblo and build a shore gun there. This is a good central location from which to oppose the enemy, who will come from the east or south. Destroy one of the enemy forces while holding back the other with a screen of PT boats and subs. By the time one enemy fleet is finished, there will still be time to turn and destroy the other. Watch Akron and New Haven. The enemy will usually try and sneak in along the northern edge.

With one's major fleet off Pueblo (the 200-point shipyard port), this area becomes fairly safe from enemy infiltrators. Send a pair of destroyers down the middle passage to harass the enemy and wipe out his rear area ports, like Los Angeles and Oxford, and attack his 200-point port of Tampa, located in the SE corner. There will be ATs on approach to this port, but press on. Wiping out the enemy reinforcements will protect one's own gains and keep the foe from re-opening ports that have already been cleared.

You will find that the computer player always has more ATs waiting to re-establish control of his ports. Be ready to either anchor a destroyer in each port captured or run back again to clean it out. ATs are bad news for PT boats and are best left to be dealt with by subs and destroyers.

Map #2 Scenarios: Generally, one should concentrate in the north and plan a major sweep: first towards Seattle and then, south towards Dover. A major light force of subs, destroyers and PT boats should head west to capture the enemy 200-point city of Springfield and knock out Fluke and Dublin, the other two major ports. Should this "fast force" encounter heavy enemy vessels, it is an opportunity to redeploy the central fleet off Boston in order to deal with them.

One will probably lose the two southern ports of Texas and Jersey. Fast ATs can take Duke and Hat while placing a sub (or destroyer) along with a cruiser (or battleship) in these two ports. In that way, the enemy cannot take them right away and get the points. The trouble with deploying a major fleet in the south is that the player's 200-point shipyard port, Liverpool, is in the north and one simply cannot afford to lose it. In all situations, protecting one's own 200-point shipyard port and denying the enemy his is a major objective.

The First Convoy Scenario: One will have plenty of time to get places. Park a cruiser, or even a carrier, with the convoy and just plod along. Meanwhile, one's beleaguered main fleet must find and destroy the enemy. Although there are a lot of "points" travelling with the convoy, it is still the capture of ports which will determine the winner. Therefore, the player must do four things at the same time: protect the convoy; protect his own ports; capture other ports and destroy the enemy fleet.

Concentrate on harassing the enemy ports to deny him points while seeking out his fleet. The convoy is tough so it can be saved if the enemy finds it with several ships. Trying to do all four things runs the risk of losing all four . Remember that those points are awarded for ports *each and every turn that they are controlled.* Thus, in a 12 turn game, a 500-point port will gain someone 6,000 victory points! Double that if it is an enemy starting port. If one can't get the points for a port, make sure to deny them to the enemy by sinking his transports and attack transports. (Players will quickly notice that they never seem to have enough of these lowly vessels). **CGW**

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Action Stations ... 32

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Budokan ... 21
Bug's Bunny Cartoon Workshop 32
California Games II ... 27
Captain Comic II ... 17
Cardinal of the Kremlin ... 27
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Conan the Cimmerian ... 32
Conflict:Middle East ... 37
Conspiracy:The Deadlock Files ... 35
Continuum ... 33
Corporation ... 32
Countdown ... 36
Covert Action ... 37
Crackdown ... 18
Crime Does Not Pay ... 32
Crime Wave ... 36
Crossword Magic ... 34
Crusaders of the Dark Savant ... 39
Curse of the Azure Bonds ... 33
Cybergenic Ranger ... 32
Das Boot Submarine ... 31
Days of Thunder ... 27
Death Knights of Krynn ... 33
Dick Tracy ... 32
Dick Tracy Print Kit ... 17
Dog Eat Dog World ... 32
Dog Eat Dog/Sound Source ... 43
Dragon Strike ... 33



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Beauty & Beast Print Kit ... 18
Bill Elliot's Nascar Challenge ... 32
Billy the Kid ... 28
Black Gold ... 32
Blitzkrieg ... 32
BlockOut ... 28
Blue Max ... 17
Bo Jackson Baseball ... 32
Breach 2 ... 22
Bridge 6.0 ... 26

Dragon Wars ... 32
Dragon's Lair:Singe's Castle ... 37
Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp ... 43
Drakkhen ... 37
Dream Team ... 32
Duck Tales:Quest for Gold ... 22
Dusk of the Gods ... 37
E. Thorp's Real BlackJack ... 32
Eagle's Rider ... 32
Earl Weaver Baseball 2 ... 40
Earthrise ... 22
Elite Plus ... 29
Elvira ... 34
Elvira II ... 43
Escape From Hell ... 19
Eye of the Beholder 2 ... 40
Eye of the Beholder ... 33
F-15 II Scenario Disk ... 20
F-15 Strike Eagle II ... 34
F-19 Stealth Fighter ... 43
F-29 Retaliator ... 33
Falcon 3.0 ... 43
FireKing ... 25



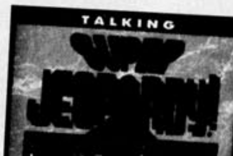
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Freakin' Funky Fuzzballs ... 23
Full Metal Planet ... 31
Future Wars ... 32
Games People Play ... 29
Games:Winter Challenge ... 35
Gateway to Savage Frontier ... 33
Genghis Khan ... 37
Gettysburg:The Turning Point ... 39
Gold of the Americas ... 25
Gold of the Aztec ... 33
Golden Axe ... 18
Grand Slam Bridge ... 22
Gunship 2000 VGA ... 41
Halls of Montezuma ... 25
Hard Nova ... 18
HardBall II ... 31
Hare Raising/Sound Source ... 43
Harpoon ... 39
Harpoon BattleSet # 2 ... 21
Harpoon BattleSet # 3 ... 21
Harpoon BattleSet # 4 ... 25
Harpoon Challenger Pak ... 57
Harpoon Scenario Editor ... 28
Heart of China ... 37



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Heroes of the Lance ... 33
Hockey League Simulator ... 26
Home Alone ... 27
HoverForce ... 32
Hoyle's Book of Games 2 ... 25
Hoyle's Book of Games 1 ... 25
Hunt for Red October ... 23
The Immortal ... 29
Indiana Jones 4:Fate of Atlantis 40
Indianapolis 500 ... 18
Indiana Jones:Last Crusade ... 29
Iron Lord ... 34
Ishido' ... 34
J. Nicklaus Course Disk 4 ... 17
J. Nicklaus Course Disk 5 ... 17
Jack Nicklaus Golf Unlimited ... 37



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James Bond:Stealth Affair ... 35
Jet Fighter II ... 42
John Madden Football 2 ... 34
Jones in the Fast Lane ... 26
Kampfgruppe ... 39
King's Quest V ... 38
Kings Bounty ... 22
Knights of Crystallion ... 30
Knights of the Sky ... 37
L' Empereur ... 37
Lakers vs. Celtics ... 18
Legend of Faerghail ... 32
Leisure Larry 1 VGA ... 37
Leisure Larry 3 ... 37
Leisure Larry 5 ... 37
Lemmings ... 32
More Lemmings ... 19
Lexicross ... 30
LHX Attack Chopper ... 28
Liberty or Death ... 37
Life & Death ... 24

Life & Death II:The Brain ... 33
Links Bayhill Course Disk ... 18
Links Bountiful Course Disk ... 18
Links Firestone Course Disk ... 18
Links Pinehurst Course Disk ... 18
Links Dorado Course Disk ... 18
Links: The Challenge of Golf ... 36
Loom ... 23
Loopz ... 28
Lord of the Rings ... 34
Lord of the Rings II ... 37
Lost Admiral ... 37
Les Manley:Lost in L.A. ... 37
Lost Patrol ... 33
M1 Tank Platoon ... 41
Manager's Challenge Baseball .. 31
Maniac Mansion w/clue book ... 19
Martian Dreams ... 37



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Martian Memorandum ... 36
Matrix Cubed ... 34
Mean Streets ... 36
Medieval Lords ... 39
Medieval Warriors ... 25
MegaFortress: Flight of Old Dog 40
MegaFortress Mission Disk 2 ... 27
MegaTraveller II ... 37
Mickey & Minnie's Print Kit ... 17
Mickey's ABC/Sound Source ... 43
Mickey's Crossword Puzzle ... 22
Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzle ... 32
Mickey's Memory Match ... 22
MicroLeague Basketball ... 27
MicroLeague Football Deluxe ... 37
Might & Magic 1 & 2 ... 33
Might & Magic 3 ... 44
Mike Ditka Ultimate Football ... 35
Millenium ... 27
Monopoly ... 27
MoonBase ... 27
Murder ... 30
NCAA: Road to the Final Four ... 34
Night Breed ... 14
Night Hunter ... 19
Night Shift ... 19
Ninja Gaiden 2 ... 27
No Greater Glory ... 37
Nobunaga's Ambition II ... 37
Nuclear War ... 34
Obitus ... 39
Operation COM•BAT ... 32
Overlord ... 32
Penthouse Jigsaw (Adult) ... 25
Perfect General ... 37
Personal Pro Golf ... 32
PGA Commemorative Edition ... 46
PGA Course Disk ... 19
PGA Tour Golf ... 33

Pick N' Pile ... 28
Pipe Dreams ... 19
Planet's Edge ... 39
Playmaker Football ... 32
Playroom ... 29
Pools of Darkness ... 40
Populous ... 31
Populous:Promised Lands ... 14
Powermonger ... 40
Prehistorik ... 32
Prince of Persia ... 27
Pro Football Analyst ... 37
Pro Tennis Tour 2 ... 33
Railroad Tycoon ... 34
Reach for the Stars ... 25
Red Baron ... 37
Renegade Legion Interceptor ... 39
Rider's of Rohan ... 32
Rise of the Dragon ... 37
Road & Cars 1 for Test Drive 3 .19



Magic Candle II by New World Computing $40

Rocketeer/Sound Source ... 43
Roller Coaster Construction Set 32
Roller Coaster/Sound Source ... 43
Romance of Three Kingdoms 2 .43

Rommel ... 25
Rotox ... 28
Rules of Engagement ... 39
Savage Empire ... 37
Scenery Disks ... 22
Scrabble Deluxe ... 32
Search for the King ... 36
Secret of Monkey Island EGA ... 28
Secret of Monkey Island II ... 40

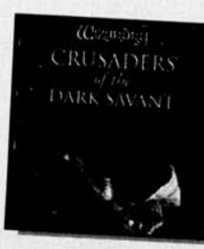


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Secret of Monkey Island VGA ... 39
Secret of the Silver Blades ... 33
Secret Weapons Mission Disk 1 22
Secret Weapons Mission Disk 2 22
Secret Weapons of Luftwaffe ... 44
Shadow of the Sorcerer ... 33
Siege ... 39
Silent Service II ... 37
Sim City ... 30
Sim City Graphic:Ancient Cities .23
Sim City Graphic:Future Cities ... 23
Sim Earth ... 41
Sim Earth for Windows ... 41
Sleeping Gods Lie ... 32
Sliders ... 32
Space Ace ... 37
Space Quest 4 ... 37
Space Wrecked ... 32
Spellcasting 101 ... 37
Spellcasting 201 ... 43
Spirit of Excalibur ... 32
Stanford Wong's Video Poker ... 32
Star Control ... 31
Star Trek V:Final Frontier ... 33
Starflight 2 ... 22
Strategic Forces ... 25
Stratego ... 32
Street Rod II ... 29
Strike Commander ... 47
Strip Poker 3 ... 33
Stunt Driver ... 32
Stunts ... 33
Super Car Pak ... 37
Super Jeopardy ... 27



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Swap ... 32
The Taking of Beverly Hills ... 27
Team Yankee ... 37
Teenage Ninja Turtles ... 26
Terminator ... 34
Test Drive III ... 35
Tetris ... 24
The Rocketeer ... 32
Theme Park Mystery ... 32
Their Finest Hour ... 40
TimeQuest ... 37
Tony LaRussa Baseball ... 33
Tony LaRussa Al Stadium ... 18
Tony LaRussa NL Stadium ... 18
Tony LaRussa Great Teams ... 18
Tracon II:Air Traffic Controller ... 43
Tracon II for Windows ... 43
Treasure Trap ... 27
Triple Action Pak ... 47
Trivial Pursuit ... 28
Trump Castle II ... 32
Tunnels & Trolls ... 17
Tunnels of Armageddon ... 29
Turbo OutRun ... 18
Twilight 2000 VGA ... 37
Typhoon of Steel ... 39
Ultima Trilogy ... 37
Ultima 7 ... 47
Ultima 6 ... 40
Ultrabots:Sanction Earth ... 37
UMS II Planet Editor ... 32
UMS II: Nations at War ... 37
Uncharted Waters ... 43
Vaxine ... 28
Vegas Gambler ... 28
Vengeance of Excalibur ... 32
Vette ... 33
Video Poker ... 32
War of the Lance ... 33
Warlords ... 29
Wayne Gretzky Hockey II ... 34
Wayne Gretzky 2:Canada's Cup .35
Western Front ... 37

Wheel of Fortune Vanna White .. 27
Where America's Past Carmen .. 37
Where in Europe is Carmen ... 32
Where in Time is Carmen ... 32
Where in USA is Carmen ... 32
Where in World is Carmen ... 32
Where in World is Carmen VGA .. 48
White Death ... 32
Wing Commander 2 Speech Pak 17
Wing 2 Special Operations 1 ... 27
Wing 2 Special Operations 2 ... 27
Wing Commander ... 39
Wing Commander Mission 1 ... 22
Wing Commander Missions 2 ... 22
Wings of Fury ... 27
Wizardry Trilogy ... 32
Wizardry V ... 32
WolfPack ... 22
Wonderland ... 38
WordTris ... 30
Worlds at War ... 32
Wrath of the Demon ... 32
Zac McKracken ... 19

EDUCATIONAL

Algeblaster Plus ... 32
Berenstain Bears: Counting ... 18
Berenstain Bears: Letters ... 17
Berenstain Bears:Junior Jigsaw .18
Berenstain Bears:Colors ... 27
Bushbuck Charms,Viking Ships .32
Challenge of Ancient Empire ... 32
Designasaurus II ... 28
Donald's Alphabet Chase ... 14

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Ecosaurus ... 27
EarthQuest ... 37
Geo Jigsaw ... 27
Goofy's Railway Express ... 14
Grammar Gremlins ... 32
Headline Harry EGA ... 32



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Headline Harry VGA ... 37
KidPix ... 37
Kid Works ... 32
Math and Me ... 22
Math Blaster Mystery ... 32
Math Blaster Plus ... 32
Math Rabbit ... 27



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Mickey's 123 ... 27
Mickey's ABC ... 27
Mickey's Colors & Shapes ... 27
Mickey's Runaway Zoo ... 14
Midnight Rescue ... 32
Nigel's World ... 32
Number Munchers ... 32
Operation Neptune ... 37
Oregon Trail ... 32
Outnumbered ... 32
Personal Trainer S.A.T. ... 32
PC Globe V4 ... 41
PC U.S.A. 2.0 ... 41
Read & Roll VGA ... 32
Reader Rabbit 2 ... 39
Reader Rabbit ... 32
Reading & Me ... 27
Speed Reader ... 32
Spell It Plus Talking ... 32



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Super Munchers ... 32
Super Spellicopter ... 27
Think Quick ... 32
Treasure Mountain ... 32
U.S. Atlas ... 38
U.S. Atlas for Windows ... 54
What's My Angle ... 32
Word Attack Plus ... 32
Word Munchers ... 32
Writer Rabbit ... 32
Writing/Publishing Center ... 42
AccuWeather ... 34

PRODUCTIVITY

Animation Studio ... 79
Auto Map ... 59
Bannermania ... 25
Dream House Professional ... 48
Dvorak on Typing ... 32
Dvorak's Top 30 ... 37
Eight In One ... 37
FloorPlan ... 32
Floor Plan Plus ... 47
Lottery Gold ... 32
Lottery Trend Analysis ... 18
Mavis Beacon 2.0 ... 33
My Advanced Mail List ... 32
Pacioli 2000 ... 35

PFS:First Publisher ... 90
PFS:First Choice 3.1 ... 90
Printshop New ... 38
Quicken for Windows ... 42
Screen Works ... 22
Speed Reader for Windows ... 32
Ten Best Publisher's ... 19
TravelWorks ... 47
World Atlas ... 44
World Atlas for Windows ... 54

AMIGA

688 Attack Sub ... 34
Amnios ... 32
Animation Studio ... 79
Arachnophobia ... 27
Armourgeddon ... 31
Atomino ... 34
Bard's Tale III ... 34
Barbarians II ... 32
Battle Isle ... 34
Billy the Kid ... 25
Birds of Prey ... 34
Black Crypt ... 34
Birds of Prey ... 34
Blue Max ... 34
Breach 2 ... 34
Captive ... 32
Cardinal of the Kremlin ... 30

Champions of Krynn ... 34
Chessmaster 2100 ... 34
Das Boot Submarine ... 34
Death Knights of Krynn ... 34
Deluxe Paint IV ... 108
Dick Tracy ... 27
Dog Eat Dog World ... 32
Dragon's Lair 2 ...
Duck Tales ... 18
Eye of the Beholder ... 39
Eye of the Beholder 2 ... 40
Falcon ... 34
F15 II Strike Eagle ... 37
F19 Stealth Fighter ... 43
F29 Retaliator ... 34
Gateway to the Savage Frontier ... 34
Hard Nova ... 34
Hare Raising Havoc ... 32
Harpoon ... 39

Harpoon Battleset 2 ... 25
Harpoon Battleset 3 ... 25
Harpoon Battleset 4 ... 28
Harpoon Challenger Pak ... 55
Harpoon Scenario Editor ... 28
Keys to Maramon ... 34
King's Bounty ... 34
Leander ... 32
Might & Magic 3 ... 40
More Lemmings ... 22
Lemmings ... 32
LightQuest ... 34
Lord of the Rings ... 37
Matrix Cubed ... 34



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Mavis Beacon Typing ... 34
Megafortress:Flight of Old Dog ... 39
Navy Seals ... 29
Ork ... 32
PGA Tour Golf ... 34
Paperboy 2 ... 29
Pools of Darkness ... 39
Populous 2 ... 40
Pro Tennis Tour 2 ... 34
Railroad Tycoon ... 37
Renegade Legion Interceptor ... 39
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Shadow of the Sorcerer ... 34
Silent Service 2 ... 37
Star Flight II ... 34
Star Rush ... 34
Street Rod II ... 28
The Immortal ... 34
Their Finest Hour ... 22
Ultima 6 ... 43
Who Framed Roger Rabbit ... 14
Wrath of the Demon ... 37

CD ROMS

Access Pack (4 Games) ... 79
BattleChess II ... 79
Compton's Encyclopedia Atlas 439

The Family Doctor ... 119
Guinness Disc of Records ... 69
Illustrated Encyclopedia ... 395
Intracorp 5 Game Pack ... 57
Jones in the Fast Lane ... 47
Mammals Encyclopedia ... 99
Sherlock/Shakespeare/Birds of America ... 99
Spirit of Excalibur ... 47
Stellar 7 ... 47
Super Spellicopter ... Call
Time's Compact Almanac ... 139
U.S. Atlas ... 79
U.S. History ... 249
World Atlas ... 79

SOUNDCARDS

Ad Lib Card (Micro Channel) ... 139
Ad Lib Gold 2000 ... call
Ad Lib Card ... 79
Hearsay 1000 ... 149
Sound Source ... 25
Sound Blaster Mini Speakers ... 15
Sound Blaster Midi Interface ... 79
Sound Blaster Voice Editor ... 59
Sound Commander ... 99
Soundmaster II ... 199
Thunder Board ... 99
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DiskHolder for 5.25 or 3.5 ... 9
Gameport by CHProd ... 34
Gameport MicroChannel by CH .48
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Genius 4500 Scanner ... 132
Suncom Icontroller PC ... 49
9600/2400 Fax/Modem ... 99
Portable Fax/Modem ... 249

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Mach III by CH Products ... 33
Maxx Flight Pedals ... 49
Maxx Flight Yoke ... 70
Yoke/Pedal Bundle ... 99
Tac 1+ ... 24
Thrustmaster Flight Control ... 69
Thunderstick by Kraft ... 35
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ThrustMaster Weapons Control .89
Wico Analog ... 12

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Advance to Boardwalk ... 14
Adventures of Beetlejuice ... 19
Astro Grover ... 10
Award Ware ... 14
Big Bird's Delivery ... 10
Big Boggle ... 14
Bug's Bunny's Adventure ... 14
Chip N. Dale's ... 19
Daffy Duck P.I. ... 19
DeskPower ... 14
Ernie's Big Splash ... 10



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Expert Astronomer ... 14
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Expert Labels ... 14
Expert Landscape ... 14
Expert Lottery Expert ... 14
Expert Maps ... 14
Expert Resume Writer ... 14
Expert Utilities ... 14
ExpertPerfect Typing ... 14
ExpertPersonal Finance ... 14
Easy Working Writer ... 9
Easy Working Spreadsheet ... 9
Easy Working Filer ... 9
Easy Working Tri-Pack ... 19
Fax Power ... 10
Flintstones ... 19

Fun House ... 14
Grade A Math ... 13
Grade A Spanish ... 13
Grade A Vocabulary ... 13
Grade A Spelling ... 13
Grade A SAT Vocabulary ... 13
Gremlins 2 ... 19
Grover's Animal Adventure ... 10
NFL Print Pro ... 22
Student Word Processor ... 13
Grade A Early Learning ... 13
Jeopardy 25th ... 14
Jetsons ... 19
Jetsons/Flintstones Print Kit ... 14
Looney Tunes Print Kit ... 14
Muppets Adventure ... 14
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Ninja Gaiden ... 19
Pals Around Town ... 9
Print Power ... 19
Sesame Letter Go Round ... 14
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PROTECTION:	Document Look-Up
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Rick Banks and Paul Butler
PUBLISHER:	Three-Sixty Pacific Campbell, CA



The B-52 was built in the early 1950s, primarily for engaging in nuclear warfare with the Soviet Union. Later, it was modified for conventional bombing operations. Forty years after its inception, the B-52 is still playing a role on the modern battlefield. Recently, the venerable plane made a major contribution in the Persian Gulf during Desert Storm: It helped to shape the battlefield in preparation for the ground battle. The plane was effective, both tactically and psychologically. During the war, a CNN correspondent interviewed a captured Iraqi general who said he couldn't walk to the latrine without wondering if a B-52 would bomb him. This reviewer was recently at an airshow at Love Field in Dallas, Texas and watched a B-52H do a low level fly-by. The plane is ominous.

Megafortress is the brainchild of Dale Brown and came to life in his novel *The Flight of the Old Dog*. Unlike the B-52s in the Persian Gulf, which primarily performed carpet bombing missions with "dumb bombs," the Megafortress is equipped with all the latest in high-tech weaponry, stealth technology and electronic warfare. Dale Brown trained for eight years aboard a B-52. He worked closely with **Three-Sixty** to bring his plane to life in this new computer simulation (see the Sneak Preview in *CGW* #81), and the final product reflects the work that went into the project.

Frankly, this reviewer approached *Megafortress* with a considerable amount of skepticism. After all, **Three-Sixty** is not at the top of any flight simulation fan's list after their *Blue Max* product, nor have they had many hits outside of *Harpoon* (the only current entry by Three-Sixty in the *CGW Poll*'s Top 100 list). Then, upon reading the manual and discovering that the game offers no support for a joystick, the enthusiasm level dropped even lower. Yet, what this reviewer had failed to anticipate was the way *Megafortress* could sneak up and fully capture for a player the experience of flying a B-52 in much the same way the B-52 itself takes targets on the battlefield.

It Takes Teamwork (Game Play)

Megafortress is presented to the player as a multi-position bomber simulation with activities to be mastered at Pilot, Copilot, Navigator, Electronic Warfare Officer and Weapons stations. The heart of the game lies in the manipulation of the dizzying array of controls (accessed via either hotkeys or a mouse) needed to keep this bird flying, accomplishing the stated goals of a mission and staying alive.

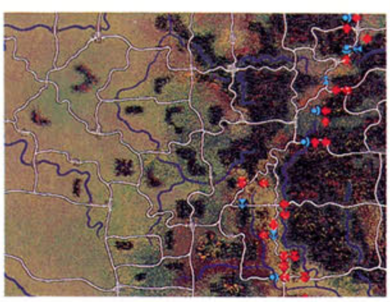
The aircraft model was developed from actual unclassified B-52H manuals. The would-be pilot is confronted with a learning curve slightly steeper than the run-of-the-mill flight simulation. For obvious reasons, the flight controls had to be simplified for sake of gameplay. After all, few would find it entertaining to fly an actual 100% simulation of a B-52. Pre-flight and in-flight checklists are available both on-line from the Copilot Electro-optical Viewing System (EVS) and in the manual. Also, pre-flight review of the flight plan, weapons loadout, possible targets and fuel requirements make getting off the ground a little slower than most fighter simulations.

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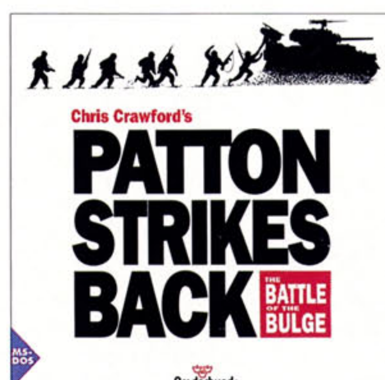
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Mission Improbable



There are three areas of combat in *Megafortress*: Red Flag (Nevada Desert), the Persian Gulf and the *Flight of the Old Dog* mission. The Red Flag missions are designed as a training ground for the new pilot. Sixteen progressively more complex missions expose the new flyer to possible combat situations. Gamers are advised to spend much time refining skills in practice flights at Red Flag. Key skills that need to be perfected are: avoidance, stealth, damage control, weapons control and, most importantly, navigation. The navigation officer can make or break a mission.

Once the pilot has gained confidence at Red Flag, the game provides fourteen missions straight off the front page from the Persian Gulf theater. Then, for the ultimate in challenge, *The Flight of the Old Dog* mission will take the player from the Nevada Desert's "Dreamland" compound (the USAF's top-secret test facility near Nellis Air Force Base) to the Kamchatka peninsula in the eastern Soviet Union. Very little information is given to the player beyond occasional communications from the mission commander, General Elliot, and intermixed storyboard screens. The missions are full of the familiar waypoints of other games in this genre. However, in this simulation the player has full control and can relocate waypoints, alter altitudes at waypoints and even add temporary waypoints while in-flight. As an example of the simplicity of design, setting a temporary waypoint while the autopilot in engaged requires only a few clicks of the mouse. The player goes to the navigator's station; switches the large EVS monitor to RADAR mode (a high-resolution image of the landscape ahead of the plane); points to the desired location for the temporary waypoint on the image; clicks and drags the indicator to the appropriate altitude and releases the mouse button. The display reflects the change with a vertical indicator marking the new waypoint and the plane adjusts course to reflect the change. The predefined course is resumed after arrival at the temporary waypoint.

Weapons Briefing

The object of *Megafortress* is not to aggressively engage every target on the way to the objective. The key is to avoid confrontation at all costs, deliver one's payload and get home. However, this will sometimes include the removal of troublesome AAA sites, SAM sites and search radar installations. Several radar-homing weapons fill the need nicely. The AGM-84E is the weapons officer's best friend. It is the Air Force equivalent of the Navy's Harpoon missile. Most prefer a fire-and-turn strategy when using this weapon, resuming course only after the contact leaves the radar display. Fortunately, taking out key installations can make the trip home a much safer journey.

Targets of opportunity can also be eliminated at the pilot's discretion. Some missions will have up to fourteen targets, so preflight planning and thoughtful weapons selection will add to success. Staying low and slow is important to maintaining a low radar profile. If the pilot maintains an altitude of less than 300' and keeps the throttle around 65-75%, search radars will only search and not track the plane.

New pilots will make many mistakes. Leaving the external lights on, going into and staying in active radar mode, leaving the gear down and having it torn off, forgetting to turn the batteries off after starting the plane, etc. Fortunately, after a few times through, these "little things" that can ruin one's day will go away and flight procedures will become automatic.

Perhaps the biggest mistake new pilots make is to engage the enemy head-on. Avoidance is the best strategy — the appropriate time to take action is when the B-52 becomes an item of interest. Always engage a plane while it is on the ground or in the air in front of the plane. As in all flight simulations, one must avoid allowing the plane to get on one's six at all costs. While attacking a plane, he should be lined up on the scope so that it is possible to go active with the radar and, when he is within fifteen miles or so, launch two AIM-120C AMRAAM missiles. If the enemy survives, it is good to fire off some air mines and make sure that the Rear-Looking Infrared system is on. This will control the AUTO CHAFF and AUTO FLARE systems if they are active.

The Electronic Warfare Station should only be used as a last line of defense. Use of the jamming systems only broadcasts the plane's location and invites more enemy response to the B-52's presence. So, unless the player is particularly looking forward to taking on MiGs head-to-head in an oversized, slow plane, it is good to avoid jamming.

To complete bombing runs, the player will have to plan his or her approach to an Initial Point (IP). Targets are generally near waypoints, but the flight plan rarely lines up the plane for an effective bombing run. Select an IP that is about 30 miles from the target and has an unobstructed flight path to the target. Make sure that the radar range is set to 10 miles and that there are no mountain ranges within 10 miles after the target. The TAC can manage variable terrain but slow speeds and steep inclines can cause the computer to force a stall and a gear-up landing into the side of a mountain. The player will want to disengage the autopilot or use temporary waypoints for an approach. The arrow keys will allow minor adjustments to the flight path from the Offensive Weapons station. Proficient use of the camera mode and attack radar systems will make these bombing runs go smoothly.

Sounds of Silence

This reviewer noticed one irritating aspect to the program. When using a sound board, the engine noise sometimes cuts out and goes silent, while leaving all other sounds active. Fortunately, by pressing the engine sound key ("O") twice, the player will be able to restore the sound or, if desired, press the sound key once to turn it off permanently.

Final Evaluation

Three-Sixty plans to release additional mission disks for *Megafortress*. With such a solid gameplay system, these should add even more to the overall value of the game. The interface is well-conceived, the graphics are well-executed and the sound board support adds a fascinating auditory dimension to the warning signals. There is enough here to keep any gadget freak happy for a long time to come. If a player is looking for a game with more emphasis on strategy and less seat-of-the-pants dogfighting, *Megafortress* will fill the bill. Although skeptical at first, this reviewer believes that *Megafortress* might just be one of the sleeper hits of '91. **CGW**

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Armour-Geddon	31
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Back to the Future 2 or 3	25
Ball Game	31
Bane of the Cosmic Forge	36
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Barron's SAT	31
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Battlechess (all versions)	31
Battlechess 2	31
Battlefield 2000	37
Battle Isle	32
Battles of Napoleon	31
Battlestorm	31
Berenstain Bear Counting	17
Berenstain Bear Color	25
Berenstain Bear Letter	25
Berlin 1948	31
Bill Elliott NASCAR	31
Bill & Ted Excellent Adventure	25
Black Gold	31
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Bloodwych	25
Bo Jackson Baseball	31
Buck Rodgers: Countdown	32
Bushbuck, Charms, and Viking	31
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Cartoon Calendar A Day Plus	19
Castles	37
Castle of Dr. Brain	31
Challenge of Ancient Empire	31
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Champions of Krynn	32
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Chessmaster 3000	32
Children's Writing and Publ	42
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Codename: Iceman	37
Command HQ	37
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Conan: The Cimmerian	31
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Conquest of Comelot	37
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Crime Wave	37
Crossword Magic	32
Crusaders of the Dark Savant	42
Curse of Azure Bonds	32
Cybergenic Ranger	31
Das Boot	32
Death Knights of Krynn	32
Deluxe Paint II Enhanced	88
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Designasaurus II	23
Dick Tracy	31
Dino Wars	25
Dragon's Lair	25
Dragon's Lair 2	37
Dream Team NBA	31
Ducktales: Quest for Gold	15
Earl Weaver 2	32
Earthquest	37
Eco Phantoms	31
Eco-Quest 1	37
Eco-Saurus	25
Elite Plus	31
Elvira	35
Elvira 2: Jaws of Cerberus	37
Entertain. Pak Wind. 1,2 or 3	28
Eye of the Beholder	32
Eye of the Beholder 2	38
E Z Cosmos	42
F-15 Strike Eagle 2	34
F-15 2 Scenario Disk	19
F117a Stealth Fighter 2	49
F-29 Retaliator	32
Faces-Tris 3	25
Falcon 3.0	42
Family Tree Maker	42
Far Side Computer Calendar	52
Firehawk - Thexder 2	21
Flames of Freedom	31
Flight of the Intruder	37
Flight Simulator A.T.P.	37
Flight Simulator (Microsoft)	41
Scenery Disk Pack -A or B	37
Franchise Football League	31
Game Shop (Microsoft)	36
Gateway to Savage Frontier	37
Geisha	31
GeoJigSaw	25
Gold of the Aztec	31
Grand Slam Bridge	20
Gunship 2000	42
Hardball 2	31
Hard Nova	32
Hare Raising Havoc	31
Harpoon Challenge	57
Headline Harry & Paper Chase	31
Heart of China	37
Hole in One Golf	21
Home Alone	26
Hoverforce	31
Hoyles Book of Games 1 or 2	22
Hoyles Book of Games 3	31
Indiana Jones 4	38
Instant Facilities Locator	26
Ishido: Way of the Stone	35
Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf	37
J. Nick. Course Disk 3,4 or 5	14
J. Nicklaus Clip Art #1	17
James Bond: Stealth Affair	32
Jetfighter 2	42
Jigsaw Pinups	22
Joe Montana Football	31
Jones in the Fast Lane	25
Khalaan	31
Kid Pix	37
Kid Works	31
Killing Cloud	31
King's Quest Bundle	37
King's Quest 5 VGA	42
King's Quest 5 EGA	37
Knights of the Sky	37
Laffer Utilities	22
Legend of Faerghail	32
Legend of Robin Hood	31
Leisure Suit Larry 1-VGA or 5	37
Lemmings	31
L'Empereur	37
Les Manley 2: Lost in L.A.	37
Lexicross	25
Life and Death 2	32
Lightspeed	37
Links	36
Links Course Disk (each)	16
or order 3 or more (each)	15
Loops	27
Lord of the Rings 2	37
Lost Admiral	38
M1 Tank Platoon	42
Magic Candle 2	38
Managers Challenge	26
Gen. Mgr. / Owner Disk	19
Mario Andretti Racing	32
Martian Dreams	37
Martian Memorandum	36
Marvin the Moose 1 or 2	31
Math Blaster Mystery	31
Math Blaster Plus	31
Math Rabbit	25
Math Zone	31
Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing	32
McGee at the Fun Fair	25
Mean Streets	37
Medieval Lords	38
Mega Fortress	38
Mega Traveller 1 or 2	37
Mickey ABC's or 1-2-3's	25
Mickey Jigsaw Puzzles	31
Mickey ABC's Combo Pack	37
Micro Cookbook	31
Micro Condensed w/ Desserts	22
Microleague Football	26
General Mgr. Disk	17
Midnight Rescue	31
Mid Winter	31
Might and Magic 3	38
Millennium 2200	25
Milliken Storyteller	32
Mike Ditka Ultimate Football	37
Mission Impossible	31
Mixed-Up Fairy Tales	31
Monologue	94
Monopoly/ Scrabble Bundle	31
Moonbase	25
Nigel's World	37
Ninja Turtle: Action	31
Ninja Turtle: Adventure	31
Nobunaga's Ambition	37
No Greater Glory	42
Nova 9	22
Nuclear War	32
Number Muncher	30
Official Baseball Card Collector	31
B.B. Card Coll. Stat Disk	19
Oil's Well	22
Operation Combat	31
Operation Neptune	37
Oregon Trail	30
Once Upon a Time 1, 2, or 3	31
Outnumbered	31
Overlord	30
Patriot	38
Patton Strikes Back	37
PC Globe or USA	39
PC Study Bible	90
Peghole	31
Personal Pro Golf	31
PGA Tour Golf	32
Phonics Plus	26
Pick 'n Pile	27
Planets Edge	38
Playroom w/ Sound Disk	31
Police Quest 3	37
Pools of Darkness	38
Populous	32
Powermonger	32
Predator 2	14
Prehistoric	31
Print Shop	36
Print Shop Companion	31
Print Shop Graphics (each)	22
Pro Football Analyst	37
Pro Tennis Tour 2	32
Quest for Glory 1 or 2	37
Railroad Tycoon	37
Random House Encyclopedia	69
Reader Rabbit	30
Reader Rabbit 2	36
Read 'n Roll VGA	31
Red Baron	37
Red Storm Rising	35
Riders of Rohan	31
Rise of the Dragon	37
Risk	25
Robosports Windows	37
Rocketeer	31
Roger Rabbit	31
Rollerbabes	25
Romance of the Three Kings 2	42
Rules of Engagement	38
Savage Empire	37
Save the U.S.S.R.	37
Scabble Deluxe	36
Second Front	38
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Mission Disk 1 or 2	19
Wing Commander 2	49
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Circle Reader Service #62

On the Road to Kavaznya: The Flight of the Old "Dawg"

Mike "Moondawg" Weksler's Megafortress Tips

Drawn from the pages of Dale Brown's novel of the same name, the "Flight of the Old Dog" mission combines both the elements of an adventure game and a simulation. To retain the challenge of the mission, there are a few differences between the experiences of the crew in the novel and the crew directed by the player. This article is designed to help gamers reach and destroy the laser in Kavaznya.

Weapons Loadout

The "Old Dog" mission table describes the targets and their respective coordinates as they have been pre-programmed into the navigation computer prior to the mission. Also shown is an appropriate weapon for taking out the target.

"Old Dog" Mission

Target	X Coord	Y Coord	Weapon
Runway	+132	+165	DAACM
Runway	+133	+165	DAACM
Grounded MiG	+132	+165	AGM-65G Maverick
Grounded MiG	+132	+165	AGM-65G Maverick
Grounded MiG	+133	+165	AGM-65G Maverick
Grounded MiG	+133	+165	AGM-65G Maverick
Control Tower	+133	+167	
Hardened Hangar	+132	+166	AGM-142A Have Nap
Hardened Hangar	+133	+165	AGM-142A Have Nap
Jet Fuel Tank	+133	+166	AGM-84E SLAM
Jet Fuel Tank	+132	+165	AGM-84E SLAM
Kavaznya Laser	+133	+164	AGM-88A HARM
MiGs in Flight	Various Locations		AIM-120C AMRAAM

Modification of this standard loadout is desirable. Since the AGM-142A Have Nap has a pre-determined location on the wing pylons and the player will want to have more than one on each pylon, it will be necessary to start by removing all of the AIM-120 AMRAAM missiles. Then, one can load up the AGM-142As and finish up with the AMRAAMs.

Great Escape — The Dreamland Scramble

Since the mission begins with a MiG-29 harassing the good guys, all can easily be lost if a player takes too much time flipping switches and performing the standard checklist. Instead, while the engine is revving at 15%, the player should extend flaps; toggle the Taxi/Land switch to "Land;" flip the Autopilot switch to "On" and turn the TAC "On." Then, one should immediately switch to the Nav station, select Waypoint Edit, and place "Waypoint 1" on the extreme left edge of the map — due west. When the player returns to the pilot's seat, the hangar doors should be fully opened.

Remove the wheel brake and throttle up to 100% at this point. This should get the plane blasting down the runway and clear of the hangar. The player should immediately man the OW station and allow the TAC and Autopilot (which is now set up to steer the aircraft due west) to take care of the rest. From that position, one should quickly switch to attack radar and designate the MiG (red blip) as the target. Then, turn on the camera and lock on the MiG for the satisfaction of watching the bogey explode. That MiG driver may be intimidating to ground targets, but once in the air, he's a wimp. The player need only select an AIM-120C AMRAAM from one of the pylons and let fly. That MiG pilot will be looking for reverse PDQ when he sees the business end of that AMRAAM *en route* for his bird.

The player should now go back and "clean up" (raise the landing gear and flaps).

Success in this phase of the "Old Dog" mission is based on how fast the player can get into the air and deal with the MiG. No further action is necessary for this leg. Eventually, an interlude screen will appear informing the player that he must get past the controller at Seattle.



The Seattle Dodge

Now, the *Megafortress* should be at altitude over the Pacific and ready to slip past Seattle Control. Again, timing is crucial. The player should squawk whatever code Seattle wishes, and then, switch off all active radar (attack mode) and toggle off all the lights and the transponder. If one immediately pushes the nose over into a 60-degree dive until the plane reaches angels 10 (10,000 feet), it should be easy to pull out of the dive after passing Seattle's control area. While diving, it is important to keep an eye on the artificial horizon/pitch instrument and begin decreasing the minimum altitude in order to be able to switch on the TAC. Since it takes a few seconds to bring the nose down 60 degrees, a fast player may be able to switch to Nav mode and edit Waypoint 1 to due west of his position. Note that it will take full power to pull out of the dive when the plane has a full load of ordnance and fuel. If the player does not dive steeply enough, Seattle will come on with a wisecrack and scramble interceptors to end the mission. If the dive is handled correctly, the player should be able to match altitude with dive angle — for example, 35 degrees of dive for 3500 feet of altitude. If done properly, this will insure pulling out of the dive at precisely the altitude one has set for TAC (108 feet). One should come out of this screaming dive at just over 150 feet and, of course, disappear from the Seattle radar screen. General Elliott will advise the player to have his navigator set a waypoint for due west (if one hasn't accomplished this during the dive). This is where the player must exercise caution. The *Megafortress* must do a 180-degree turn after that dive. If one is flying at 108 feet, a sharp bank may lose enough altitude to cause the player to have to end his mission. Also, one must try not to overcorrect or else the plane is apt to reappear on the Seattle controller's scope and, again, end the mission.

To Refuel or Not to Refuel

By now, the player should notice that all this action (not to mention the flight from Nevada) has taken its toll on the fuel stores of the mighty EB-52. As in the book, there will be a tanker for the player to refuel from. Climb to angels 10 to facilitate finding the KC-135 tanker.

When the tanker appears, the player should click on the "C" button on the refueling panel. The player will then "authenticate" by painting the tanker with the targeting (attack) radar with an AIM-120 AMRAAM selected and a heavy finger resting on the launch button. Then, after the player re-selects the "C" key once again, the KC-135 crew will suddenly be most eager for the player to have his pilot bring the EB-52 over for a drink. The active radar can then be switched off by going back to either "Scan" or "Camera" mode. Once the bomber performs the rendezvous with the tanker, it is time to move on to the real meat of the mission.

On the Road to Kamchatka

Once *en route* to the target area, the player can fly the waypoints as programmed (This can be quite challenging, as there are more than enough MiGs, SAM sites, and rough terrain to overcome) or, after the first attempt at taking out the laser base, he may wish to try the following as an alternate to the "stock" mission.

To do this, edit the first waypoint as an IP (initial point) on a run that travels right between two SAM sites (touching the perimeters of the range for both sites) and on toward the laser base. The player should fly "in the weeds," hitting the IP at 108 feet (using the TAC) and throttling back to 65 percent to conserve fuel. The player will be painted by both SAM sites and the laser base will eventually "lock on" to the Megafortress. This is the primary threat. Failing to deal with it will require rebooting the game in short order. The laser base radar is difficult to jam, though a HARM (High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile) will take out the laser radar. Once this initial threat is dealt with, the player will be able to get in and blast the airbase, along with nearby targets of opportunity. The rest of the SAM sites may be taken out, but it is preferable to continue jamming these and save his ordnance for the airbase.

In order to accomplish this, the player should edit Waypoint 1 to the coordinates of X +169, Y +116. Waypoint 2 should be edited to the location of waypoint 4 (X +130, Y +168), and Waypoints 3 and 4 should be superimposed upon Waypoint 5 (X +221, Y +254) so that the player will still have a waypoint for the Anadyr airbase in order to land, refuel, and end the mission as a brigadier general. **caw**

What Do I Do When I'm Finished?

Megafortress Mission Disk to Be Released

Similar to a *Harpoon Battleset*, the *Megafortress Mission* disk will have two new theaters: Lybia and Iran. The premise is that a more extremist government in Iran has overthrown the current one and is, in turn, providing arms to Lybia. The Megafortress will fly covertly out of Kuwait and Malta against targets in Lybia and Iran which are fortified with more sophisticated Gadfly and Gremlin SAM sites. New targets will include ships and mountain-based AAA sites. There will also be new weapons including the Penguin missile and the GBU-95 — an FAE (fuel/air explosive). The product is expected to ship in early December 1991 with a suggested retail price of $34.95.

Hits and Myths

The Esthetics and Importance of Computer Games

The State of the Magazine: The early 20th century Swiss architect turned playwright, Max Frisch, is reputed to have said, "Technology is the knack of so arranging the world that we do not experience it." At *Computer Gaming World*, we believe that computer games put the *experience* into technology so that players can learn the lessons which life inevitably teaches without the risk that is associated with real human experiences. As a result, our coverage tends to focus on the *impact* of a computer game upon the player(s) as opposed to providing ritualistic citations of technological specifications. To borrow a metaphor from another genre, we believe that the play is more important than the stage design.

To be sure, some stage designs detract from the performance of even classic theater productions. In such cases, a critic (be that critic a *re*viewer or simply a viewer) has the responsibility to note such an inadequacy. Other stage designs actually enhance the audience's suspension of disbelief. In such a case, the critic (whether formal or informal) has the responsibility of commenting on such excellence. By and large, however, the hard work of the stage designer is assimilated into the overall enjoyment of the performance of the play itself.

That is the way it should be with computer games. Even a publication like *CGW*, which tries to ask difficult questions of the games from many different perspectives, would soon become as boring to read as a pre-flight checklist if we required reviewers to recite technical specifications or make comments on technical competence of *every* game, even when the overall effect of the graphics, sound, soundtrack and documentation was simply that of blending competently into the overall experience. Our goal is to comment upon those aspects of a game which particularly enhance or devalue the game experience, not to trudge dutifully through a review formula.

We do not think that the page count of the documentation tells the reader anything about the game's potential experience. Simply talking about the technical level of the graphics may not communicate whether the artistic style is appropriate to the game or merely distracting chrome. Indeed, we have had software publishers complain that we did not talk about their "state-of-the-art" graphics when we thought that the animation itself looked like a throwback to 8-bit personal computers and their limited graphic sets.

State of the Industry: There has been plenty of debate over the last few years over whether computer games are approaching an art form. Since even the genre's most stalwart defenders are backing off from the position that computer games are an art form (a premature retreat in this editor's opinion), let us continue the discussion by suggesting that computer games represent *another* form, myth.

One reason why *CGW*'s editor has always affirmed computer games as an art form is that, in their best representations, they offer the same socially acculturating and psychologically therapeutic experiences as good art. In the editor's perspective, art should challenge the observer to consider the cultural and historical perspective of the artist *and* to rethink reality using the new viewpoint provided by the artist.

Myth accomplishes both acculturating and therapy, as well. Indeed, psychologist Rollo May's latest book (*The Cry for Myth*) describes myth as having both a regressive and a progressive function. The *regressive* function, according to May, "...brings into awareness the repressed, unconscious, archaic urges, longings dreads, and other psychic content." The *progressive* function "...reveals *new* goals, *new* ethical insights and possibilities."

It seems that computer games meet some of the same criteria. When people note the number of computer games which involve evil, monsters, murder and war, they are usually indicating that there is something wrong with the genre. However, it is often by solving a puzzle or resolving a dilemma; encountering a different perspective or unraveling the designer's allegory and deploying one's forces or retreating from the battlefield that the player comes up with new ideas and possibilities. Again, much of the subject matter covered in computer gaming seems to deal with the darker side of human existence. Yet, it is through the vicarious experience of "overcoming" such darkness that the gamer can create his/her own new light.

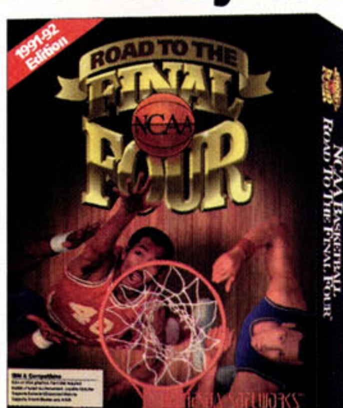
It is to be hoped that opening a dialogue in which the computer game is discussed as "myth" will be a positive step in focusing discussion on why computer games are important to society and individuals. It *could* be yet another way of allowing the design community, the critical community and the "gaming world" to consider anew the *implications* of a game's subject matter and the handling thereof.

This month, *CGW* has the privilege of inducting a game into the **Hall of Fame** which uses its technology in a very humanizing/acculturating fashion. **Three-Sixty**'s *Harpoon* not only successfully uses its technology to bring ease of use to a modern wargame, but it uses the game's command perspective to bring home the lessons of war. The continuing release of battlesets to support the game and offer new scenarios means not only further enjoyment, but also a chance to reflect on a changing world situation and the implications for potential future conflict. Our congratulations to the "myth" makers who transform the realities of war into a learning experience, Larry Bond and the gang at **Three-Sixty**. **CGW**

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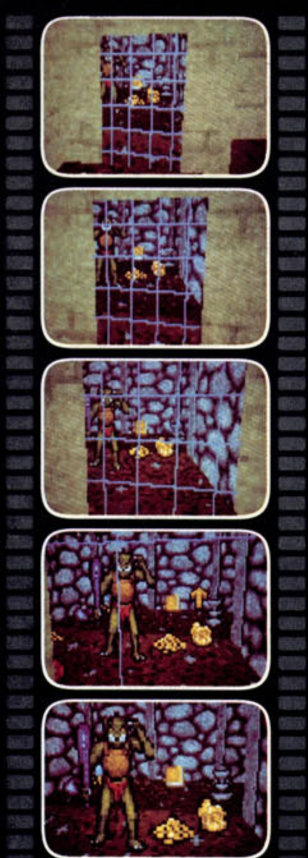
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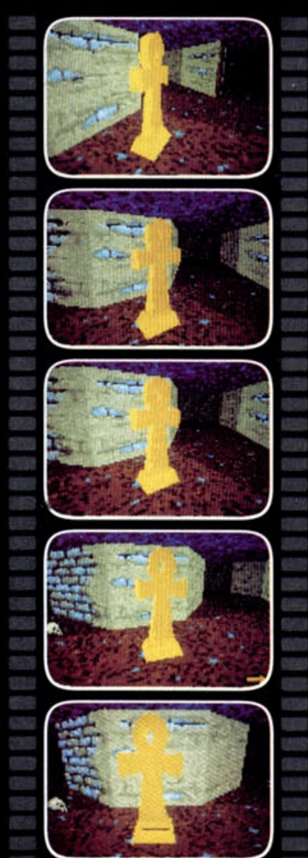
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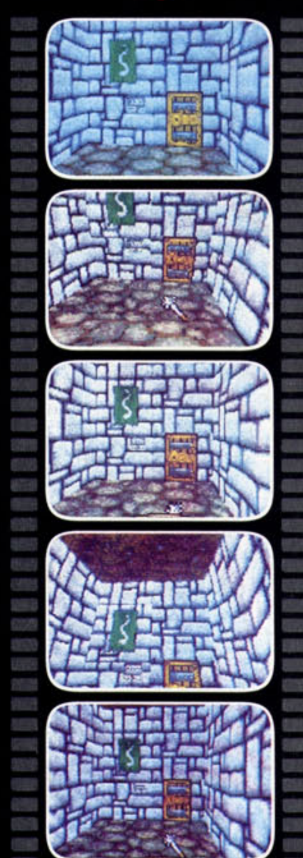
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